

LS Speaker for probe into security breach They first explored immolating

NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla On Saturday informed members of the House he has formed a "high-powered committee" to review various aspects of security in the Parliament complex and formulate an action plan to ensure that the December 13 incident is not repeated.

In a letter to Lok Sabha members, Birla also said the report of the high-level inquiry com-mittee set up by the Union Home Ministry will "soon" be shared with the House.

"In addition, I have also constituted a High Powered Committee which will review various aspects of security in the Parliament Complex and formulate a concrete action plan to ensure that such incidents do not recur," he said in the letter.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Police Special Cell intensified its crackdown on the accused involved in the Parliament security breach. On Saturday, they arrested the sixth accused, identified as Mahesh Kumawat. Police sources said Kumawat has been charged with the destruction of evidence and criminal conspiracy. Sources said all five accused

will be taken to their native places for evidence recovery and interrogation. Additionally, the police plan to record the statement of BJP MP Pratap Simha, in whose name authorisation was issued to two



intruders. Furthermore, the conspiracy police are planning to recreate the crime scene inside the Lok Sabha.

During court arguments for remand and further interrogation, the Delhi Police informed the court that the custody of the accused was required "to find the actual motive behind the attack and his association with an enemy country and terrorist organisations

The prosecutor told the court that Kumawat had been in contact with other accused persons in hatching the conspiracy for the last two years. He assisted the mastermind, Lalit Jha, in destroying the mobile phone to eliminate evidence and hide the larger conspiracy. The prosecutor added Kumawat needs to be questioned to unearth the entire

Kumawat had voluntarily come to a police station with Lalit Jha on Thursday night, and both were handed over to the Special Cell. He has been under questioning since then. The police revealed he was a member of the now-deleted Bhagat Singh Fan Club page created by the accused. The initial investigation by

Delhi Police has revealed that one of the two intruders involved in the security breach and dramatic protest in the Lok Sabha on December 13 had travelled and lived in Cambodia for a brief period, reportedly working as an aid work volunteer after dropping out from an engineering course. It has been revealed that

Manoranjan Devaraj, 33, a resment.

ident of Mysuru and one of the main intruders, had traveled to Cambodia via Bangkok around 2014 to work as a volunteer, as per his international travel records. His travel details are being verified by investigating agencies. The police are also checking if there is a foreign funding angle in this case. Sources said that the five accused revealed that they explored self-immolation and distribution of pamphlets

before settling on the plan to jump into the Lok Sabha's chamber with smoke canisters. A Delhi Police official said, "Before finalising this plan (to jump into the Lok Sabha chamber), they (the accused) had explored certain ways that could be impactful in sending their message to the govern-

They first explored immolating themselves by covering their bodies with fireproof gel but dropped this idea. They also considered distributing pam-phlets inside Parliament but finally went ahead with the plan they executed on Wednesday, the official said. Furthermore, the police will be taking all five accused to their native places for evidence recovery and interrogation. Lalit Jha will also be taken to Rajasthan, where he had fled after the incident.

The police will seek Parliamentary approval to recreate the incident that took place on the anniversary of the 2001 attack. The sources also said they may record the state-ment of BJP MP Pratap Simha, in whose name authorisation was passed to two intruders. Apart from this, the accused had also planned to start a political outfit.

However, for this, they wanted to garner media attention. They felt that by breaching the security of Parliament, their purpose would be met, one of the accused informed the police. The four accused - Neelam Amol, Sagar Sharma, and Manoranjan — had arrived with seven smoke cans to carry out the incident. Notably, Sagar, along with another accused, Manoranjan D, had allegedly popped the canisters carrying yellow smoke in the Parliament on December 13, the day the country observes the anniversary of the 2001 Parliamentary attack.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said his commitment begins where hope from everyone else ends, emphasising that the development of smaller cities is central to his vision of making India a developed coun-try. Addressing the benefi-ciaries of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra through video conferencing, the Prime Minister remarked, "With the resolve for a developed India, 'Modi's guarantee vehicle' is reaching every corner of the country?

"In just one month, the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra has reached thousands of villages and cities, with a focus on small towns, he added. Modi highlighted that his government is working to alleviate the challenges faced by all, treating them like family members.

"Our government has assisted the poor, farmers, small businesses, and various other sections of society. Modi's guarantee comes into play when hope from everyone else ends," he affirmed.

The Prime Minister acknowledged that for a long time after independence, the benefits of development were confined to a few big cities. However, his government is now concentrating on the development of smaller cities,

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which will fortify the foundation for a developed India. He encouraged everyone to take advantage of various government schemes.

"Although Modi initiated the Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra, he noted that today, the countrymen have taken charge of the journey. At a point where the journey pauses, people from other villages or cities start leading it," he stated. Modi also launched the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra in Rajasthan, Madĥya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Mizoram, where recent Assembly elections were held. The yatra, initially launched in other States, faced delays in these five States due to the model code of conduct during the elections. During the event, Modi interacted with beneficiaries from various States who have availed themselves of various government

schemes. He praised the

"atma nirbhar" women of the country, highlighting their role in sustaining themselves and becoming a boon for others Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri stated that every

one's work is now expedited as the people of the country have become "Modiji's VIP". Modi, who has called for making India a developed nation by 2047, engaged with the beneficiaries of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra via conferencing. video Thousands of beneficiaries from across the country participated in the event, joined by a large number of Union Ministers, MPs, MLAs, and local representatives.

The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra aims to achieve the saturation of flagship government schemes by ensuring their benefits reach all targeted beneficiaries in a time-bound manner."

PATANJAL

Congress prepares for crowdfunding campaign

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's historic 'Tilak Swaraj Fund' in 1920-21, the Congress on Saturday announced to launch on December 18 its nationwide 'Donate for Desh' crowdfunding l of the 2024 Lok Sabha election It said the initiative aims to empower the party in creating an India that is rich in equal resource distribution and opportunities. The campaign will be launched by Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge in Delhi. During a Press conference at the Congress headquarters, party gen-eral secretary KC Venugopal and Treasurer Ajay Maken said Indians above the age of 18 can donate a minimum of ₹138 or in multiples of ten, such as ₹1,380. "Our inaugural campaign — 'Donate for Behtar Bharat' — commemorates the 138-year journey of the Indian National Congress. Embracing our history, we invite supporters to donate in multiples of ₹138, symbolising the party's enduring commitment to a better India," Venugopal said. The party has created two online channels for the crowdfunding campaign — a dedicated portal at donateinc.In and the official Congress website at inc.In. All Pradesh Congress Committee presidents will raise awareness about the campaign through press conferences and social media, he said, adding it will primarily online until December 28, the party's foundation day. After that, ground campaigns, including door-to-door visits by volunteers, targeting at least 10 houses in every booth for contributions of at least Rs 138 from each, will be launched. Venugopal said state-level office bearers, elected represen-tatives, District Congress Committee presidents, PCC chiefs and AICC officials will be encour-aged to contribute at least Rs 1,380 each. "For the campaign's effectiveness, all PCC pres-idents will identify potential donors," he said. Venugopal also announced a "mammoth rally" in Maharashtra's Nagpur on December 28 to mark the party's 138th foundation day. He said at least 10 lakh people will attend the historic rally.

Navy intercepts hijacked vessel in Arabian Sea

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy swiftly respondd to a maritime incident in the Arabian Sea involving the hijacking of a Malta-flagged vessel with 18 crew members on board. The Nav maritime



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undertaking surveillance in the area and its warship on anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden were deployed to locate and assist the vessel MV Ruen after receiving a distress call from it, Navy officials said here on Saturday. The hijacking attempt was reported on Thursday and the Indian Navy sent its mission deployed platforms to the area of the incident early on Friday, officials said.

The Navy said its aircraft flew over the hijacked vessel and it has been continuously monitoring movement of the vessel, which is now heading towards the coast of Somalia.

"Responding swiftly to the developing situation, the Indian Navy diverted its naval maritime patrol aircraft undertaking surveillance in the area and its warship on anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden to locate and assist MV Ruen," officials said.

'The aircraft overflew the hijacked vessel on early morning of December 15 and the aircraft has been continuously monitoring movement of the vessel, which is now heading towards the coast of Somalia," they said. Officials said the Indian Navy's warship deployed in the Gulf of Aden for anti-piracy patrol also intercepted the MV Ruen on Saturday morning. The overall situation is being closely monitored, in coordination with other agencies in the area, he said.

The Indian Navy remains committed to being a first responder in the

MV Ruen, a vessel with 18 crew onboard, that had sent a Mayday message indicating boarding by approx six unknown personnel. Indian Navy diverted its Naval Maritime Patrol aircraft undertaking surveillance in the area and its warship on Anti Piracy patrol in the Gulf Aden to locate & assist MV Ruen PTI

region and ensuring safety of merchant shipping, along with interna-tional partners and friendly foreign countries," the official said. MV Ruen, the vessel, reportedly lost control on Thursday, in a first significant pira-cy incident recorded after 2017. The attack has highlighted a major lapse in the ongoing anti-piracy efforts in the Arabian Sea.

In response to the incident, the UK Marine Trade Operations issued a warning, urging vessels to exercise caution while traversing the Arabian Sea near Somalia.

The Indian Navy is now on high alert in the region. Meanwhile, it has also advised ships to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity.

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Minor marriage haunts modern India

ARCHANA JYOTI 🗖 NEW DELHI

fter witnessing a decline in Achild marriage in India from 2006 to 2016, there is evidence of stagnation since then, as one in five girls and nearly one in six boys in India are still married below the legal age, with some States reporting a significant increase in such incidents. These grim findings are published in The Lancet Global Health, indicating a worrisome indicator that reflects the inadequacy of current policy designs . In fact, during the later years, the study notes that six



States/Union Territories (including Manipur, Punjab, Tripura, and West Bengal) saw an increase in girl child marriage and eight (including Chhattisgarh, Goa, Manipur, and Punjab) saw an increase in boy child marriage. In recent years, the practice has become more prevalent in some States/Union Territories, as per has been almost no research

the study led by researchers at Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health. India's success in eliminating child marriage is crucial to the achievement of the Sustainable

Development Goal target 5.3. Child marriage is a human rights violation and a recognised form of gender and sexual-based violence. This study is among the first

to estimate how rates of girl and boy child marriage have changed over time at a state/union territory level. Boy child marriage in particular is often overlooked; to date, there

estimating its prevalence," said lead author SV Subramanian, Professor of population health and geography.

"Our findings offer a big step forward in understanding the burden of child marriage in India — one that will be critical to effective policymaking," he said

Using data from all five waves of India's National Family Health Survey, from 1993, 1999, 2006, 2016, and 2021, they estimated the number of men and women ages 20-24 who met that definition across State/Union Territories.

Continued on Page 2

nation 02

Modi, Oman Sultan Uddhav ups ante against Shinde Government discuss relations

sunday pioneer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

NEW DELHI | SUNDAY | DECEMBER 17, 2023

India and Oman on Saturday reviewed the entire spec-trum of their bilateral ties here during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. The two nations firmed up a vision document to significantly expand bilateral cooperation in around 10 key areas and pushed for concluding a trade pact as early as possible during their "productive" talks. Modi and Tarik also discussed the situation arising out of the Hamas-Israel conflict and the challenge of terrorism as well as the larger need to try and achieve a two-state solution to the Palestine issue as a way forward.

At a media briefing, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra described the discussions between Modi and the visiting leader as "comprehensive and constructive".

He said Modi and Oman's Sultan adopted a joint vision document to lay the pathway for bilateral cooperation in a



range of areas including maritime sphere, connectivity, green energy, space, digital payments, health, tourism and agriculture and food security. Kwatra said the two leaders also gave strong impetus and push to conclude the India-Oman comprehensive economic partnership agreement

as early as possible. The Sultan of Oman arrived in Delhi on a state visit on Friday - his first trip to India as the top leader of the influential Gulf nation.

"Today is a historic day in India-Oman relations as the Sultan of Oman is on a state visit to India after 26 years ... I am sincerely welcoming you on behalf of all the people of India," Modi said in his opening remarks at the delegation-level dialogue.

India and the Sultanate of Oman are strategic partners and the bilateral trade and investment relationship between the two nations has been on an upswing in the last few years.

T N RAGHUNATHA

Upping the ante against the Eknath Shinde Sena-BJP-NCP (Ajit Pawar) alliance Government over its controversial decision to award the multi-thousand crore Dharavi redevelopment project to the Adani group, the Opposition Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray himself on Saturday led a massive morcha from Asia's largest slum to Bandra-Kurla (BKC) complex where the business group's office is located.

Coming as it did ahead of the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls, the Sena (UBT)'s morcha set a potential agenda for the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) – comprising Uddhav's outfit, Congress and NCP (Sharad Pawar) to take on the BJP-led grand alliance in the crucial April-May 2024 polls

On her part, Mumbai Regional Congress Committee (MRCC) president Varsha Gaikwad has already gone on record, alleging that the Dharavi redevelopment contract given to the Gautam Adani-led Adani Group's SPV Adani Properties as Asia's biggest scam and that Adani will gain a staggering Rs



1 lakh crore from the project. Addressing a large gathering of Sena (UBT) activists, Uddhav Thackeray said: "The state government is sold out to the Adani group. It has given away the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) of Dharvi land to Adani. This is the biggest TDR scam in the world".

"You may have the paper, pen and office...but remember we have the roads.... (Gautam) Adani and people behind him must the see crowd...Significantly, I am addressing the rally right in front of the headquarters of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)," Uddhav said. "The TDR bank would be with the government instead of Adani selling it privately," the Sena (UBT) president said. Alleging irregularities in the

process that went into the awarding of the Dharavi redevelopment project to the Adani, Uddhav said: "There is more than what meets the eye in the process that went into the decision to award the Dharavi project to the Adani group".

The people of Dharavi fought the Covid pandemic. They will not surrender before any builder," Uddhav said.

Uddhav said that to be displaced Dahravi should get at least 500 sq feet house each instead of 325 sq ft tenement. "I am not against re-development. But police personnel conservancy workers and mill workers should get the houses. Each Dharavi slum dwelling family should get a 500 sq ft house instead of 325 sq ft tenement each.

UGC cautions students on fake degrees offered by edtech firms in tieup with foreign varsities

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The UGC has warned detech companies and colleges offering degrees in collaborative arrangements with foreign universities not recognised by it, according to officials. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has also reiterated that none of these degrees will be valid and cautioned students against taking admission in such courses.

"It has been observed that many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and colleges have entered into collaborative agreements with foreign-based educational institutions or providers not recognised by the commission and have been facilitating the issuance of foreign degrees to the students," UGC Secretary Manish Joshi said.

"Any such kind of collaboration or arrangement is not recognised by the UGC and, accordingly, the degrees issued subsequent to such collaboration arrangement are also not recognised by the commission," he added. Joshi said it has also come to

विश्वविद्यालय अनुवान आयो UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSI बराहरतात रचर का AH ZAMAR MAR E Rent / NEW DELHI-110

the UGC's notice that some edtech companies are advertising in newspapers, social media and television, offering degree and diploma programmes in online mode in association with some foreign universities and institutions. "Such a franchisee arrangement is not permissible and any such programme or degree shall not have UGC recognition. Action will also be taken against all the defaulting edtech companies as well as the HEIs under applicable regulations," Joshi

"Students and the general public are advised to exercise due caution and any enrolment in such courses will be at their own risk," Joshi added.

fluid loss through sweating,

potentially causing dehydration

while there is also increased

risk of preterm birth. The

stress of high temperatures

can trigger early labor in preg-

nant women, leading to pre-

mature delivery. Preterm birth

poses various health risks for

the newborn, including respi-

ratory and developmental

Then there are health risks such

as heat-related illnesses due to

hormonal changes and

increased blood volume. Also,

prolonged exposure to high

temperatures can cause blood

vessels to dilate, potentially

reducing blood flow to the

uterus. Inadequate blood flow

to the uterus may impact the

delivery of oxygen and nutri-

ents to the developing fetus,

adversely affecting its growth,

said Dr Sharma.

issues, she explained.

added.

'Rising temperature poses grave health risk to pregnant women' J&K higher reaches see snowfall atures can lead to increased

MOHIT KANDHARI

head of the beginning of AChillai Kalan from December 21- a 40-day-long period of harshest winters, several higher reaches including areas falling along the line of control in North Kashmir witnessed a fresh spell of snowfall on Saturday.

The road link via the Mughal road connecting Poonch district with the Kashmir valley



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was also closed down due to a the natural caves in the highfresh spell of snowfall.

er reaches. During heavy snowfall sever-Meanwhile, the Border Security Force (BSF) is likely al high-altitude mountain passes and traditional infilto activate its Winter border tration routes in the region get management strategy to preblocked forcing the terrorist vent any major infiltration handlers to shift their focus bid from across the International border. towards the International bor-

Sharing a fresh assessment of der in the Jammu region. The joint teams of security the intelligence agencies on the forces are already conducting ground, Kashmir range massive search operations in Inspector General, BSF Ashok the twin border districts of Yadav on Saturday told reporters on the sidelines of a Rajouri and Poonch to track function in Pulwama, "About down the footprints of the foreign terrorists hiding inside 250 to 300 terrorists are present at launchpads across the PUBLIC NOTICE tice is hereby given to the General Public th. I: SURENDER SINGH RAWAT (GPA HOLDER) ushAL SINGH RAWAT (GPA HOLDER) (GPA HOLD PUBLIC NOTICE

border "waiting to infiltrate" inside Jammu and Kashmir. The officer, however, added that security forces were alert and would foil any cross-border infiltration attempts.

"There are intelligence inputs that 250-300 terrorists are waiting at launchpads, but we and the Army have dominated all the vulnerable patches and are alert," Inspector General, BSF, Ashok Yadav told reporters in Pulwama district of south Kashmir.

ARCHANA JYOTI 🗖 NEW DELHI

 $R_{climate\ change\ poses\ grave}^{ising\ temperatures\ due\ to}$ pregnant women at the workplace, a study has said, calling for enforcement of comprehensive protective labour policies to protect such would-be mothers to ensure their health and their newborn babies.

Due to the unique physiological and anatomical body changes, pregnant women are more vulnerable to occupational heat. What are the adverse effects of occupational heat exposure during pregnancy on maternal and foetal outcomes?

To find out, researchers from the Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research, Chennai, joined hands with the University of Oxford. They enrolled pregnant women at 8-14 weeks of gestation in Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram, Tiruvannamalai, Salem and Nagapattinam, and followed

Out of 800 women in the cohort, 343 worked in the formal sector and 457 in the informal sector who were surveyed. The questionnaire captured maternal age, gestational age at recruitment based on self-report from the last menstrual period, and working at high temperatures,. as per the study 'Heat Exposure and Pregnancy Advocating for safer workplaces? To investigate the effects of

occupational heat stress on pregnant women, the researchers recorded pre- and post-shift core body temperatures, the temperature of the internal organs, such as the heart, liver, brain and blood,

using an infrared tympanic

The researchers found a positive relationship between the two, which was consistent with the self-reported heat strain symptoms. Every three months, the team used a wet-bulb globe to estimate heat exposure: the combined effects of temperature, humidity, radiant heat, and air movement on the body. Women with occupational heat exposure had a greater incidence of raised core body temperature. Excessive sweat leads to skin rashes. Tiredness, muscle cramps, and headaches are due to the lowering of elec-

trolytes. Sweating and the consequent reduction of urine output leads to urogenital issues such as burning sensations, urinary tract infections, and vaginal itching. Heat-exposed women during the third trimester of

pregnancy reported more heat stress symptoms, dehydration symptoms and urogenital issues, even after accounting for other factors that could influ-

ence these outcomes. The women were 50% more likely to have signs of physiological strain and the risk of miscarriage doubled. Exposure to high temperatures in the first trimester increased the risk of birth defects at birth.

Heat exposure in the workplace has consequences for the health of the mother and the foetus, say the researchers.

'Yes, extreme heat can have various impacts on pregnancies, posing potential risks to both the mother and the developing fetus," said Dr Vaishali Sharma, gynecologist, (AIIMS) COAG(Harvard) from VS Healthcare about the study results. She further said high temper-

study of NLRP3 inhibitor "ZYIL1" in patients with according to a recent study, the activation of NLRP3 inflam-more than 7 million people are masome with ZYIL1, which mice, rats and non-human prihas been establishe ber of validated pre-clinical models of neuro-inflammation and Parkinson's disease. ZYIL1, has demonstrated a desirable ADME profile, with good safety margin. In phase I studies, ŻYIL1 was found to be safe and well-tolerated in human volunteers, according to a statement

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PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NFW DFI HI

Parkinson's disease. Parkinson's is a devast ais ease with patients steadily losing the control on movements leading to unintended or uncontrollable movements, such as shaking, stiffness and difficulty with balance and co-ordination. It is estimated that there are

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condition. more than 8.5 million people in the world suffering from Parkinson's disease. In India,

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8. Lotus Pond Plaza.Vaibhav Khand Indi

Email: sernbphulbani@gmail.com

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) Bid Identification No. CCE_R and B_PLB_20 of 2023_24

No. 3019 Dated. 16.12.2023 Phone: - 06842 254004

invites percentage rate bid in double cover	system in	ONLINE MODE for construction of theBridge&
Nature of work	:-	Bridge& Building Works
No. of tenders	:-	Three Nos
Tender cost	:-	Rs. 10,000/- (through online) only.
Class of Contractor	:-	B, A & Special class
Date & Time of sale & receipt of bids	:-	10.00 AM of 22.12.2023 to 5.00PM of 05.01.2024
Date of Opening of bid	-	11.00 AM of 06.01.2024
https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum	/Corrigendu	im / Cancellation of tender can also be seen in
	invites percentage rate bid in double cover Building works as detailed in the table below Nature of work No. of tenders Tender cost Class of Contractor Date & Time of sale & receipt of bids Date of Opening of bid The Bidders shall have to participate in online https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum	No. of tenders :- Tender cost :- Class of Contractor :- Date & Time of sale & receipt of bids :-

OIPR-34129/11/0022/2324

Phulbani (R&B) Circle, Phulbani

Online Tender Document for M.P. Police

POLICE HEADQUARTER, M.P., BHOPAL Bhopal, Dated 12/12/2023

No. PHQ/15/GPC/7134-1/2023

"ONLINE TENDER NOTICE"

Online tender are invited by Deputy Inspector General of Police (Provisioning) Police Head Quarter Bhopal on behalf of DGP MP Bhopal for FSL Items on website https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app

Sr	Name of Equipment	Quantity	EMD Paid Online Through mptenders.gov.in	Tender Fees (Rs.)
1	Gas Chromatography- Mass Spectrometer GC-MS	01	2,25,000/-	5000/-

Cost of tender document (Tender Fee) is non refundable and cannot be exempted in any condition & submit online through website https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app

Tender document can be download from the website of MP Police (www.mppolice.gov.in)

Bids shall be submitted online only at MP Tenders website: https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app

4. Critical Date Sheet:

Published Date	13/12/2023 Time 14:00 PM
Bid Document Download Start Date	14/12/2023 Time 12:00 PM
Pre Bid Meeting Date	20/12/2023 Time 12:00 PM
Bid Submission Start Date	27/12/2023 Time 11:00 AM
Bid Submission End Date	03/01/2024 Time 14:00 PM
Bid Opening Date	04/01/2024 Time 16:00 PM

Intending Bidders are advised to visit this website regularly till closing date of submission to keep them selves updated as any change/modification in the tender will be intimated through this website only by cor rigendum/addendum/amendment.

Bids will be opened as per date/time as mentioned in the Tender Critical Date Sheet. After online opening of Technical-Bid the results of their qualification as well Price-Bid opening will be intimated later.

> (D. R. Teniwar) D.I.G. (Provisioning) For: Director General of Police M.P.

ydus Lifesciences , a phar Limaceutical company from Ahmedabad on Saturday announced that it has received permission from USFDA, to initiate the Phase II clinical

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is informed that the cars with the following car numbers which have completed their life Petrol Cars 15 Years Diesel Cars 10 Years. The MCD drive was confiscated by Pine View Technology PvI Ltd and has not been claimed by anyone till now. All these vehicle owners are informed to come to the company's office and claim the scrap value of the vehicle. Otherwise, all these vehicles will be scrapped in the next three days. DL1CL5217, DL6CB9517, DL2CAF5963,

BR1A2590, DL3CAL1503, DL2CK9041, JP14V1403, DL8CB7193, UP80AF8059 DL3SAJ8667. AS25B1965. DL6CK5288 014SAL2598. DL9S02033. DL9CJ5475. DL9SAA0478, DL9SQ8629, DL4CAH5879, L8ST7916, DL9SL9994, DL9SP4165 DL7SAF6699, UP80AE7241, DL4SAZ7424, L1SAQ6992, DL3SE9529, DL3SAZ8135, DL9SS0645, DL4SAL2035, DL4SAY2021 L8SK4499, DL4SBJ3790, UP13M9363 DL8SAM2238, MA3FJEB1 DL3SBK2447 HR10M9699. S00368570. BJ14BS0475. DL2FAC0300, DL9CQS8607, DL9SR8797, DL9CS3236, HR26X0888, DL4CAV1898, MA3EVB11 DL8CR0797, HR26AF5417 S01187765, DL7CJ2668, DL2CAC3748, DL9CR1144. HR26AL4503. DL3CAP9588. DL4CG8589, UP25H8105, DL8CP1847, L4CNB9006, DL3SAQ0908, DL3CBU6904 DL9CJ6792, HR23B5317, DL8CS2870, AP09BJ2095, DL9SE5032, DL3CAJ3966, JK02AH8323, DL9SN4173, DL3CBB3831 JP78AF0405, DL9SA2441, HR51AB0435, L9SS0244, MP07KE8727, DL8CJ9866 DL4SV6732, DL3CBE2308, AP10AN5326, DL3SB9041. DL8CZ8444. DL3CAE3040 MP15N2096. MAKGD853 UP15P8613. DL4SAQ1261, H7N400124, DL9CS4797 MH05AK0119, DL9CAC2010, DL8CN1996 KA03EH3394, DL1CQ3857, UP16H0837 DL9SK3193, DL7CJ3911, DL2CZ8014. DL4SAM4711, MAK3A357 DL9CF9520. L3SAP6938, E1N101574, UA08C4581, GJ1EQ8020, RPF2958, GJ1FK5343. DL9SK2659. DL9SR4244. DL11CA1961. TN22BX3485, HR26AE3986, DL9CAG9220, KA03Y2881, DL2FHU0066, DL5CJ1276, DL7SAC2153, DL8CNB3903, DL7CH4648, DL4SNC2370, DL7SR2653, DL4CAJ2505, DL3SAJ0105, HR12L9512, DL4CNA1496, L4CAG5575, DL9SL7871, DL1CQ3644, DL1CG5221, DL9SV8991, DL1CAC8554, RJ19SC2062, HR19C7307, P68773 MA3FJEB1 DL9SU1382, DL2CAK4143, S00221429, DL8CR2226, DL4CAH6434, DL3CBW2184 DL1LG6140, DL1CN5896, DL1K5973, DL3CBE1722, DL9CK8744, HR12K2244, DL1LG8311,

development Pankaj R. Patel, Chairman, Zydus Lifesciences Ltd. said, "Our researchers have been working on path-breaking discoveries that can unlock new possibilities and help patients lead more healthier and fulfilled lives. Our team is developing a novel, disease modifying approach through inhibiting

and neurodegeneration in patients suffering from Parkinson's disease." ZŸIL1 is a novel oral small molecule NLRP3 inhibitor. Studies have demonstrated that ZYIL1 is highly potent and can suppress inflammation caused by NLRP3 inflammasome activation. ZYIL1 was found distributed in the brain & CSF of various here.

Minor marriage...

From Page 1 The study "Prevalence of Girl and Boy Child Marriage: A Repeated Cross-sectional Study Examining the Subnational Variation across States and Union Territories in India, 1993-2021," found that between 1993 and 2021, child marriage declined nationally. The prevaence of girl child marriage decreased from 49 per cent in 1993 to 22 per cent in 2021, while boy child marriage decreased from 7 per cent in 2006 to 2 per cent in 2021. However, progress towards stopping the practice of child marriage has stalled in recent years: The largest reductions in child marriage prevalence occurred between 2006 and 2016, with the lowest magnitude of reduction occurring between 2016 and 2021.

By 2021, the researchers counted more than 13.4 million women and more than 1.4 million men ages 20-24 who were married as children. The results showed that one in five girls and nearly one in six boys are still married below India's legal age of marriage. Most states and Union

Gurugram were purchased by Mr. Manmohan Malik S/o Sh C S Valik & Sanjiv Kakkar S/o Sh H R Kakkar And Manmohan Malik S/o Territories saw a decrease in Shri CS Malik R/o W1 B112 Wellington Est. DLF5 Gurugram; who headcount of child marriage in have lost the complete documents including Receipts of payments girls between 1993 and 2021. baid to DLF Home Developers Ltd. If anybody finds the same then Uttar Pradesh had the most he or she may handover to M/s. DLF Home Developers Ltd or the substantial absolute decrease, which accounted for an esti-Manmohan Malik mated one-third of the all-India W1 B112 Wellington decrease in headcount of child Est. DLF5 Gurugram, Haryana marriage in girls observed DLF Home Developers Ltd between 1993 and 2021. West Gurugram, Haryana Bengal saw the largest absolute

increase with over 500?000 more girls married as children.

Although smaller in the absolute number compared with girls, Manipur, Goa, and Guiarat saw substantial increases in the magnitude of the child marriage in boys headcount between 2006 and 2021. In Gujarat, the headcount burden of child marriage in boys increased by 121.9 per cent. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act passed in 2006 sets the legal age of marriage for

men to 21 years and women to 18 years. "Child marriage is a human rights violation," said first author Jewel Gausman, research associate in the Department of Global Health and Population. "It is both a cause and a consequence of social and economic vulnera-

bility that leads to a range of poor health outcomes. The state/union territory stagnation in reaching zero child marriage that we observed is a significant concern-and is a call for India to reignite progress."

Rockli Kim, visiting scientist at the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, Akhil Kumar from Center for Geographic Analysis, Harvard University, Boston, MA, USA Shamika Ravi from Indian Government, and S V Subramanian from Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, Cambridge are co-authors of the study.

G-21697/23



capital 03

LG refutes CM charges of **halting Farishtey Scheme**

ieutenant Governor (L-G L'Ita Dolhi Saturday responded to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, refuting allegations of halting the "Farishtey Scheme" calling it a "pre-meditated exercise of hubris" aimed at shirking responsibilities.

In a communiqué to chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Saturday declined to issue any direction or order on the Faristey scheme as the matter is sub judice. This comes after the Supreme Court sought a response from Delhi lieutenant governor's office and others on a plea filed by the AAP government seeking release of funds for its 'Farishtey Dilli Ke' scheme providing free treatment to accident victims.

"Since the matter is now subjudice before the Supreme Court, it would not be proper for me to issue any direction/order/opinion in the instant matter at this stage. It is surprising that instead of obtaining full facts and circumstances of the matter from the concerned administrative



department and coordinating payments done to private hoswith Delhi Arogya Nidhi pitals for the same in FY 2022-Finance Department of Delhi 23 stood at Rs. 4,85,46,973 and the same till October this government, the Minister (Health / Finance) has preyear stands at Rs. 3,54,35,230. ferred to file a writ before the These figures, prima facie nei-Supreme Court. It appears that, ther indicate a "halt" in the Scheme, nor do they support what is being played out is allegations of "non-payment", nothing but that characteristic game of disowning one's own made by the Minister and failures, ineptness and ineffiendorsed by the Chief Minister ciency and creating a public in fact they belie the claims," perception that one is not he said. being allowed to work," LG said Saxena further said that he was

in his communiqué. "In fact, I am informed that the total number of beneficiaries Arogya Kosh (DAK), a society under the RTA (Farishtey)

constituted vide a Cabinet Decision in 2011. Its compo-Scheme during 2022-23 was 3698 and the same stands at nent include (i) Financial 3604 in 07 months, till October Assistance to EWS patients; (ii) 31 during FY 2023-24. The Free High End Radiological

Cashless Specified Surgeries Scheme; (iv) Road Traffic Accident (RTA) schemc; and (v) Cashless Dialysis Scheme. "It is essential to underscore that while the Chief Minister may refer any proposals or matters of administrative importance, these proposals, as per Rule 23(viii) of the Transactions of Business Rules, 1993, are mandated to follow the prescribed route through the Chief Secretary. As the proposal in question did not adhere to this specified route, I deemed it necessary to refer the matter to the Chief Secretary with the purpose to obtain a factual report before considering any action on the proposal," reads the commu-

niqué. Atishi in her has made certain allegations, such as non-payment of pending bills, raised by some private hospitals who had treated victims of road informed that the said Scheme accident under Farishtey scheme. The 'Farishtey Dilli Ke' is a component of the Delhi scheme encourages people to rescue those who have met with road accidents. Under it, the government foots the hospital bills of those who have met with accidents in the city.

Saurabh reacts | DCW notice to PWD over on letter of no streetlights at bus stop Saxena to CM

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Reacting on Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena's letter to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Farishtey scheme, Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said after the scheme was launched in 2018, the number of beneficiaries started increasing with increasing awareness about this scheme. The number reached 6131 in the year 2020-21 and then it declined to 5456 in year 2021-22. However, in 2022-23 it further declined to 3698 and this is when this matter was very seriously

taken up by the then Health Minister Manish Sisodia. "The similar declining trends are also reflected in the expenditure by the Health Department on Farishtey scheme. LG saab has been misinformed that a payment of Rs. 3.54 crore has been made till October this year, however the truth is that only Rs. 2.08 crore has been paid. The Health Department in its reply to Vidhan Sabha Question has also informed that there is a pendency of Rs.

8 crore for the Farishtey Scheme," he said.

The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) has issued a notice to the city Government's public works department over "missing streetlights" at the Lalita Park bus stand and several other places in the national capital. DCW chief Swati Maliwal said the commission conducted a surprise inspection at several locations and found those shrouded by darkness due to the streetlights being nonfunctional.

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

"After receiving complaints, a surprise inspection was conducted at Lalita Park bus stand and many other places last evening (Friday). During inspection, it was found that there was complete darkness at and near many bus stands. Very unsafe for women," Maliwal said in a post on X. "Issuing notice to Delhi government department in this regard," she added.

Meanwhile, Delhi BJP Spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor has hit back at the AAP government saying DCW chief Atishi has exposed the hollowness of Delhi Minister Atishi's claims of providing good street light cover for Delhiites. "Maliwal has

According to the Delhi Commission for Women, inspection was done at the stretch of Pushta Road from the Ramesh Park bus stop to Lalita Park.

"The road was absolutely dark as none of the streetlights were functioning. It was observed that many

poles did not even have a streetlight, rendering the road pitch dark and unsafe. The commission also inspected the Lalita Park bus stop, which was also pitch dark," the notice stated

The women's panel further said that women who frequently travel in buses often nention feeling unsafe at deserted shelters.

The Delhi Commission for Women has been receiving several complaints regarding dark spots at bus stops in Delhi," Maliwal said.

The commission has sought reasons for the bus stops and roads being dark and asked for the details of officials responsible for streetlights in these areas.

The commission has also sought details of complaints received since January 1, 2022, regarding dark spots at these bus stops and streets and action taken on each complaint.

Dismal condition of her MCD conducts demolition Kejriwal to leave for 10 days drive in Jahangirpuri Vipassana course next week dept roads irks Atishi

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will leave for a 10-day Vipassana meditation course next week.

Kejriwal will leave for the course to an undisclosed location on December 19, a day after the winter session of the Delhi Assembly is concluded as per the schedule.

Vipassana is an ancient Indian meditation technique in which practitioners abstain from any communication, either by talking or via gestures, for an extended period to restore their mental wellbeing.

Sources said it was not clear whether he would attend the INDI Alliance meeting on December 19 or not.

The chief minister has been practising Vipassana for a and Jaipur, in the past years to



practise the ancient meditation system.

is currently behind bars in the Every year, Kejriwal goes for Delhi liquor policy case. a 10-day Vipassana course and this year he will do so Sources in the Rajya Sabha secretariat confirmed that a from December 19 to 30, the letter has been received from the AAP regarding appointing officials said. Chadha as its floor leader. The letter is with the RS

Meanwhile, the AAP has appointed its MP Raghav Chadha as the leader of the party in Rajya Sabha in place of Sanjay Singh. In a letter to the Rajya Sabha Chairman, the AAP party leadership has said that in the absence of Sanjay Singh, who

PWD Minister Atishi on Saturday pulled up her own department for laxity and apathy towards the dismal condition of roads. Atishi said all roads wider than 60 feet are maintained by the PWD and these roads are in abysmal conditions in most parts of the city.

a communication In addressed to the PWD Principal Secretary, the minister has directed with an ultimatum to repair all the potholes in the national capital by the end of this year; soliciting daily reports on the progress to be tabled.

The PWD Minister further directed the that resurfacing of roads where its required, the youngest members of has to commence latest by Rajya Sabha. The AAP has a 01/02/2024 and finish by total of 10 MPs in the Upper 29/02/2024.

The PWD Minister also directed the PWD Principal



officers who cause delays. Expressing her displeasure at the state of disrepair of PWD roads, Atishi stated that it's shocking & unacceptable; serious accidents are possible. Due to the PWD's laxity & apathy, Delhiites are at the

Two arrested for

killing person in

West Uttam Nagar

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

wo men were arrested for Two men were arrested for allegedly killing a person in west Delhi's Uttam Nagar area,

PWD; I have taken at least 10 meetings & carried multiple

ground visits", Atishi wrote in her communication.

Earlier, PWD Minister Atishi pulled up the Principal Secretary of the PWD on the poor conditions of roads in Mandawali in east Delhi and directed him to get the roads receiving end "I've been directing PWD for the past 6 months regarding



STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

exposed the Atishi's claims, " he

In the notice to the public

works department, Maliwal

wrote, "During the visit of

Ramesh Park bus stop at 6.45

pm on December 15, the com-

mission was shocked to find

that there were no lights at the

'Furthermore, the streetlights

on that stretch of the road were

non-functioning. The back-

side of the bus stop was also a

deserted area. The entire bus

stop was shrouded in darkness

and unsafe for women and girls boarding or de-boarding buses

from there," she said in the

said.

bus stop."

notice.

demolition operation was Ademolition operation Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to combat the illegal colonisation of agricultural land in Near Ram Rahim Chowk in Jahangirpuri area of north Delhi. The operation took place under the jurisdiction of Bhalaswa Dairy Police Station. According to a MCD Press statement, the MCD squad, equipped with JCB machinery and a dedicated workforce, initiated the demolition action at the location. The operation

proceeded solely with the

yards in Khasra No. 444, Near Ram Rahim Chowk, had witnessed unauthorized development by certain

colonizers/builders. They had undertaken the plotting of the land, erecting boundary walls, constructing rooms, and laying plain cement concrete roads.

During the operation, the entire colony's plain concrete roads and boundary walls, along with rooms, were sys tematically dismantled, eradicating any traces of the illegal colonization. The action sends a clear message about the authorities' commitment to and upholding land use regu-



places, including Bengaluru Chadha will henceforth be the party's leader in the upper

ha

Installed 3 months ago,

after the BJP, the Congress and the TMC

House currently.

house. AAP MP Sanjay Singh

Secretary General for imple-

mentation. Chadha is one of

The AAP has the fourth

Programmes held

timelines are strictly adhered to, and strict action against officers for the road's deplorable condition.

100 Railway staffers

honoured for services

of MCD. The targeted area, measuring approximately 4000 square lations

Bouncers thrash DU student. brother at liquor shop in Gurugram

STAFF REPORTER

GURUGRAM



Union Minister said that in

2014, India was on 10th spot in

global economies while in 2004, India was already in the

10th spot and therefore, it was

a lost decade. "We should all change the colonial mindset and by 2027

we will become one of the top

three. Railways will play a vital

role in India's growth journey.

We are saving huge amounts in

logistics costs alone. We are all

lucky that we have a PM who

is so emotionally attached with

railways. PM has often shared

so many experiences with me,

that it can only come from

someone who has indepth

knowledge about the func-

tioning of the Railways," the

In her welcome remarks, the

Chairperson, Railway Board,

Jaya Varma Sinha said that

Indian Railways has achieved

remarkable feats in the past few

years, such as 34 new Vande Bharat trains for transporting

passengers, 1309 stations rede-

velopment under Amrit Bharat which will improve overall

experience and save time for

Talking about rail safety, the CRB said advance technology is being used by railways to

improve overall safety includ-

ing kavach which is being

implemented with speed and

passengers.

railway minister said.

Two bouncers deployed at a liquor shop here on Golf Course Road allegedly thrashed a Delhi University student and his brother and threatened to kill them, police said on Saturday.

According to police, the vic-tims were identified as Anshul Chauhan, a Shimla native, running a business in Delhi, and his younger brother Abhay, who is enrolled in an MBA programme at Delhi

University. They said the two were beaten up on Wednesday by bouncers deployed at the liquor shop adjacent to ReSet restaurant in Sector 43 on Golf Course Road.

"To go to the restaurant, it was necessary to buy liquor from the adjacent wine shop of the restaurant.

We asked the liquor shop to keep a bottle we already had and went inside with a new bottle," Anshul Chauhan said in his complaint, according to police.

"After coming back, when we asked for our liquor bottle, the bouncer first abused me and then suddenly slapped my brother. When he protested, the man beat up my brother and threatened to kill him," he said.

Chauhan filed a police com-plaint the next day. Following the complaint, police filed an FIR against the bouncers under various sections of the IPC at Sushant Lok Police Station.



STAFF REPORTER NEW DELH

fter a long wait, when a lift Aat the Community Centre at the Green Park Extension here was installed in August, elders in the locality hoped to use the recreation facilities available at the first floor without the hassle of climbing the stairs

The much-needed lift was inaugurated by the Area Lok Sabha MP and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Meenakshi Lekhi with much fanfare at an event attended by senior officials from the municipal bod-

However, three months on and the lift has remained non-functional due to reasons best known to the authorities. This has left the senior citizens aghast as they are being forced to use the stairs. Some of them are 80 to 90 years old who are unable to climb the stairs. Says JR Gupta, Chairperson of the Confederation of Senior Citizens Association of Delhi, "we have approached concerned authorities such as Commissioner South Delhi

Municipal Commissioner, our

MP Lekhi and Electrical Department of the Delhi Government. But to no avail." The safety certificate to the lift was issued by the Labour Department of the Delhi Government on September 1, 2023. "But we do not know where this lift has got stuck", he said.

About 100 senior citizens aged between 79 to 90 years are daily visiting the recreation centre of the Senior Citizens Council of Delhi at the first floor of the community centre to avail free facilities such as homeopathic dispensary, physiotherapy, blood sugar test, computer training, yoga classes, library, newspapers, and television and carrom board among others. At times, discourses on various topics such as on spirituality and health are also organized at the centre, said the complaint by the Association to Gyanesh Bharti, Commissioner, SDMC. What's the use of such facilities when older adults who often suffer from various chronic diseases are unable to access the care resources, lamented Gupta.



STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI Under the ongoing Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra

across the country, programmes were organised at Civic Centre, Dakshinpuri and Sanjay Camp Chanakyapuri in the national capital. At the Civic Centre function Union said

Ministers Piyush Goyal, Smriti The prime minister said that Irani, BJP National Vice for a long time after indepen-President Baijayant Jay Panda, dence, benefits of development Delhi BJP President Virendra were limited to a few big cities, Sachdeva and Vice President but his government is focussing Dinesh Pratap Singh joined. on development of smaller Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and MP Ramesh cities and that would strengthen the foundation for a devel-Bidhuri joined at Dakshinpuri oped India.

and Meenakshi Lekhi joined at Sanjay Camp in Chanakyapuri. Addressing the beneficiaries of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra through video conferencing, the prime minister said, "With the resolve of a developed India 'Modi's guarantee whi addressed various programs. The Union Ministers said that the main objective of tak-ing out the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra is to achieve India, 'Modi's guarantee vehiperfection in the major schemes of the Modi governcle' is reaching every corner of the country." In one month, the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra ment and under this it will be has reached thousands of vilensured that these schemes lages and cities and most of are implemented. Benefit them are small towns, he reaches targeted beneficiaadded. Modi said his govern-

ment is trying to ease the troubles of everyone like a family member.

"This is our government that has helped the poor, farmers, small businessmen and various other sections of society. Modi's guarantee begins after hope from everyone else ends," he

After listening to the address of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Ministers ries in a timely manner.

police said on Saturday. The accused, identified as Sunil Paswan (21) and Aman (19), claimed that the victim used to abuse them, they said. On Wednesday, a person stat-ed that he was talking to his friend Raj when Paswan and

> came there and started quarrelling with them, a senior police officer said.

When they opposed, Paswan took out a country-made pistol and fired at Raj before fleeing the spot. Raj was taken to DDU Hospital where he was declared brought dead, the officer said.

Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) M Harsha Vardhan said.

They also disclosed that Raj and his friends used to abuse them due to which they wanted to teach them a lesson, police said.

In order to take revenge from them, Paswan arranged a country-made pistol. On Wednesday, they found Raj and his friends standing near

their house. They intentionally started quarrelling with Raj and fired at him, he said.

The country-made pistol was recovered from them. Paswan was previously involved in three criminal cases, police added

Railway Ministry has con-ferred with the prestigious railway employees award - 'Ati railway employees award - Ati Vishisht Rail Seva Puraskar' (AVRSP) – to 100 Railway Employees from various zones/divisions, production units & railway PSUs all over the country for their out-standing services Railway standing services. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw presented 21 Shields for promoting best practices among

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The awards/shields were presented at the 68th Railway Week Central Function, organised at Bharat Mandapam in the national Capital on Friday evening. Addressing the gathering after conferring the awards, Vaishnaw congratulated the awardees for their exceptional work and effort. He said the transformation work is going on at full pace in Railways under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"More electrification has been done in 9.5 years than in the past 40 years. The big picture behind this is when in 2015 PM merged the railways budget with general budget, interest/ capital charge had to be paid on the rail grant and it removed all financial hindrances for the railways

Lack of Investment, which was the biggest problem for railways, is now a thing of the past," Vaishnaw said.

The Union Minister asserted that "People's expectations with the railways is being fulfilled now. Elaborating on the economic growth of the nation, the

Aman, along with their friends, Railway employees.

CCTV footage showed two people involved in the incident. Later, they were nabbed from Badarpur Boarder, Deputy

nation 04

INDIA Bloc indulging in petty politics: BJP

sunday pioneer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELH

The BJP on Saturday accused the Congress and other 'INDIA' bloc constituents of indulging in "petty politics" over the December 13 Parliament security breach incident to shield those involved in it.

NEW DELHI | SUNDAY | DECEMBER 17, 2023

Addressing a Press conference at the BJP headquarters here, the party's national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla alleged that the Opposition 'INDIA' bloc parties are standing by the perpetrators of the security breach as their links with them were emerging. He also took a jibe at the Congress over the launch of its crowd-funding campaign, saying those who looted the country for 60 years are now seeking donations from the same country.

The Congress has started a 'Donate for Desh' campaign to deflect public attention from the "unparalleled corruption" in the party that has once again surfaced following the seizure of a huge amount of cash from its Rajya Sabha MP Dhiraj Sahu and a recent incident of crime against a tribal woman in Karnataka's Belagavi district, Poonawalla claimed.

"There should never be petty politics on an issue as grave as national security and Parliament security," he said. "But some people's political character and political DNA is such that they would indulge in petty politics on the issue of security also ... There must be no compunctions in any



of our minds to resonate in one voice and condemn the incident without ifs or buts," Poonawalla charged.

The BJP leader said Rahul Gandhi, the Congress' "immature" leader, has "shamefully" justified the December 13 incident by saying that it happened because of unemployment and the issue of price rise in the coun-

"Rahul Gandhi ji what has happened to you? ...After losing three assembly polls, you will come up with such illogical arguments on such an incident whose sole objective was to terrorise Parliament anyhow," he said.

Poonawalla asked whether Rahul Gandhi implied that if someone felt there was unemployment in the country or if a person was not getting a job, then such a per-son should enter Parliament with a canister and release smoke

"Is Rahul Gandhi now down to inciting people and giving them ideas and suggestions that if you feel aggrieved about a particular political narrative, then you must also take a smoke bomb or smoke canister in your hand and



He alleged that it is not just the Congress that is trying to shield those involved in the December 13 incident but the entire "I.N.D.I. Alliance and their ecosystem".

"It is because the links of the perpetrators of the incident are coming out with the Congress party and some extremist radicalised Leftist organisations sup-ported by it," Poonawalla charged.

The BJP's IT department head Amit Malviya also slammed the Congress and said, "Rahul Gandhi never disappoints; always talks trash. For the record, unemployment in India is at 3.2%, the lowest in six years." Instead, Rahul Gandhi and I.N.D.I Alliance leaders must explain the close linkages of those involved in the Parliament breach with Congress, TMC, and CPI(M). Rahul Gandhi, in particular, must clarify his associa-

tion with Asim Sarode, who was part of Bharat Jodo Yatra and has offered to provide legal aide to the intruders," he added in a post in 'X'.

Modi to visit Surat, Varanasi to launch development initiatives

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Surat and Varanasi on December 17 and 18 to launch several development initiatives. His office said Modi will inaugurate the new integrated terminal building at Surat air-port and the Surat Diamond Bourse on Sunday before travelling to Varanasi to attend the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra. On Sunday evening, he will inaugurate the Kashi Tamil Sangamam 2023 at the Namo ghat, the statement said. The next day, he will inaugurate the Swarved Mahamandir at a public function and also participate in the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra'.

The prime minister is also scheduled to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth over Rs 19,150 crore in his parliamentary constituency.

The PMO statement said the new integrated terminal building is equipped to han-dle 1,200 domestic passengers and 600 international passengers during peak hours and has provision for further increasing the peak hour capacity to 3,000 passengers with the annual handling capacity increasing to 55 lakh passengers.

As the gateway to the Surat city, the terminal building has been designed with its local culture and heritage ensuring that the essence



should reflect both in the interior and exterior, creating a sense of place for the visi-

The Surat Diamond Bourse will be the world's largest and modern centre for international diamond and jewellery business, the statement said. It will be a global centre for trading of both rough and polished diamonds as well as jewellery.

It will comprise a state-of-theart 'Customs Clearance House' for import and export, jewellery mall for retail jewellery business and facility of international banking and safe vaults. In line with his vision of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat', Modi will inaugurate Kashi Tamil Sangamam 2023 at Namo Ghat and will also flag off the Kanyakumari '? Varanasi Tamil Sangamam train, the statement said.

His office said the prime minister has put a special focus on transforming the landscape of Varanasi and enhancing the ease of living for the people living in

Varanasi and adjoining regions in last nine years. Taking another step in this direction, the prime minister will dedicate and lay the foundation stone of various development projects costing around Rs 19,150 crore," it said.

Modi will inaugurate the New Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Nagar-New Bhaupur Dedicated Freight Corridor Project built at a cost of around Rs. 10,900 crore. Other railway projects which will be inaugurated include Ballia-Ghazipur City rail line doubling project; Indara-Dohrighat rail line gauge conversion project.

He will flag off the second Varanasi-New Delhi Vande Bharat Express train, Dohrighat-Mau MEMU train and a pair of Long Haul goods trains at the newly inaugurated Dedicated Freight Corridor.

He will also flag off the 10,000th locomotive made by Banaras Locomotive Works, it said.

Murmu leads nation in paying tribute to fallen heroes of '71

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday led the nation in paying tribute to the fall-en heroes of the 1971 war that led to redrawing of the political map of South Asia and ended the horrific violence unleashed by the Pakistani army on millions of Bangladeshi people.

The remarkable victory in the war following the surrender of more than 90,000 Pakistani soldiers on December 16, 1971, resulted in the birth of Bangladesh as an independent country. commemoratés India December 16 as Vijay Diwas. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, paying his heartfelt tribute to the brave soldiers, said their sacrifice and unwavering spirit will forever be etched in the nation's history. 'Today, on Vijay Diwas, we pay heartfelt tributes to all the brave heroes who dutifully served India in 1971, ensuring a decisive victory. Their

valour and dedication remain a source of immense pride for the nation," he said in a post on X.

"Their sacrifices and unwa-vering spirit will forever be etched in the people's hearts and our nation's history. India salutes their courage and remembers their indomitable spirit," Modi said.

nation remembers with grat-

laid a wreath and paid homage to the fallen heroes at the National War Memorial to mark the day. Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt, Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Pande, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar, Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane

itude the selfless sacrifice

made by our armed forces

during the 1971 war. On Vijay Diwas, I pay homage to the bravehearts who displayed

unparalleled courage and

Defence Minister Rajnath

Singh also recalled the

"indomitable courage and val-

our" of armed forces person-

"We are proud of our armed

forces who have fearlessly

protected our country in

every circumstance. Their

sacrifice and service will for-

ever be etched in our hearts,"

The defence minister also

nel in the war.

he said.

achieved historic victory."

and Vice Chief of the Air Staff President Murmu said, "The Air Marshal AP Singh also paid homage

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Whereas

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) R/w Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, (on underlying pool assigned to ICICI Bank by Dewan Housing Finance Ltd.) in relation to the enforcement of security in respect of a housing loan facility granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between DHFL and the borrower, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal ty and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limit

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Number (Loan Account Number (DHFL Old LAN & ICICI New LAN)	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
	Hanuman Sahay Meena/ Sanjay Devi Meena- 00900015239- QZJNV00004999837- National Security Guard, AC-1/ G2, Hanuman Sahaymeen, CSQM 12, Srg Msg Manesar, Gurgaon, Haryana- 122051		April 22, 2023 Rs. 9,47,793.00/-	Tonk/ Gurgaon

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ quarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : December 16, 2023 Authorized Officer Place : Gurgaon ICICI Bank Limited

13 MPs suspension not linked to Parliament breach stir: Birla

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

ok Sabha Speaker Om Birla Lon Saturday rejected suggestions that the suspension of 13 Opposition members was linked to their protests over the recent security breach and recalled that the House had displayed exemplary solidarity and collective resolve when breaches had happened in the

past. On December 13 afternoon, two men jumped inside the Lok Sabha chamber from the visitors' gallery with canisters of yellow smoke. They were pinned down by MPs who were in the House during the Zero Hour.

With protests by the opposition disrupting Parliament proall MPs, informing that he had constituted a "high-powered committee" to review all aspects of security in the Parliament complex and formulate a concrete action plan to ensure that such incidents do not recur.



er said he will share its report Birla said 13 opposition memwith the House once it is subbers have been suspended from mitted.

the House "purely to uphold" its sanctity. "At the time of With opposition parties seeking a statement from Home inauguration of the new build-Minister Amit Shah and some ing of our Parliament, we had resolved that we will refrain even demanding his resigna-

Opposition parties have slammed the suspension, noting that no action has been taken against BJP MP Prathap Simha, who facilitated the passes of two accused who carried smoke cannisters with them, while their members have been suspended for raising the issue. 'This is unwarranted. There is no association between the suspension of Hon'ble members and the incident which took place on December 13, 2023," the speaker said. Birla noted that he had dis-

cussed the security issue with leaders of all parties on the same day and added that some of the important suggestions made during the meeting were implemented immediately.

tion of security norms have In a message to the opposition, happened in the past, includhe said incidents such as visiing three cases of visitors jumprs carrying pistols, shouting

At the time of all such incidents, the House displayed exemplary solidarity and expressed its collective resolve against such incidents, he said. The speaker said people of the country do not appreciate the inappropriate conduct and interruptions during the proceedings of the House. "It was in this context that the House was compelled to take strict action of suspending Hon'ble members," he said.

As the opposition looks to intensify its protests, Birla urged all members to faithfully discharge their duties towards the nation.

Official sources noted that

numerous incidents of viola-

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Whereas

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. Name of the Borrower/ No. Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1. Navneet Sidhu/ Sumit Kumar Jakhar/ LBCHD0006131228/ LBZMO00005998150/ LBZMO00005998011	Apartment No. 8219, 8th Floor, Tower NoG, City of Dreams-1, Comprised In Khewat Khatauni No. 168/172, Khasra No. 36//20(6-19), 36//21(7-12), 37//16(8-0), 37//17(3-13), 37//25/2(3-0), As Per Jamabandi Year 2013-2014, Situated At Village Sante Majra, Hadbasat No. 186, Tehsil Kharar, District Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar, Mohali, Punjab/ December 14, 2023	July 17, 2023 Rs. 35,79,482/-	Kharar/ Delhi/ Sikar

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: December 16, 2023 Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer **ICICI Bank Limited**

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE GICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, Landmark Building, 4th Floor, 228A, AJC Bose Road, Kolkata- 700020 CIN No: L65190GJ1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

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	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number		Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	
1.	Abdul Alim/ Souri Saha/ Lig Flat 257 Second Floor, Pocket 3 Sector 14, Phase 2, Dwarka Nsit, South West Delhi Delhi- 110078 LBHOW00005649442/ LBSGI00005569978	"M. N. Apartment", Flat No F1, 1st Floor, Front Side (South-East Corner) Road Facing Flat And Flat No. F-3, 2nd Floor, Western Side, Plot No. R.S. 401/1139, L.R. 763, Khatian No. R.S. 57/1, L.R. 6131, J.L. No. 71, Mouza Baramohan Singh P.S. Matigara, A.D.S.R. Siliguri II At Bagdogra, Dist Darjeeling, West Bengal. Admeasuring An Area Of Flat No F1, 1st Floor Measuring 1160 Sq. Ft. Super Built Up Area And An Open Car Parking Space Vide No. P-3 At Ground Floor Measuring (9 Ft X 14 Ft.)= 126 Sq. Ft. Along With The Undivided Proportionate Share Or Interest In The Land And Flat No. F-3, 2nd Floor Measuring 920 Sq. Ft. Super Built Up Area And An Open Car Parking Space (tin Shed) Back Side At Ground Floor Measuring (7 Ft. X 12 Ft.)=84 Sq. Ft. Alond With The Proportionate Share Of Interest In The Land./ Date Of Symbolic 14.12.2023	July 10, 2023 Rs. 44,30,268/-	Delhi

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: December 16, 2023	Authorized Officer
Place: Delhi/ NCR	ICICI Bank Limited

This committee is in addition to a CRPF director general headed panel which is investigating the incident. The speakin the Parliament House Estate comes under the jurisdiction of Parliament.

"Accordingly, it is the Parliament's responsibility to formulate a detailed action plan on security measures in accordance with your suggestions, and thereafter, their implementation is also the responsibility of Parliament," he

trom bringing pla the House; we will not create ruckus in the Well of the House," he said.

It is indeed unfortunate that some members and political parties are linking the decision of the House to suspend these members to the security breach when two persons had jumped into the MPs' chamber from the visitors' gallery on December 13, he said.

slogans, jumping from the visitors' gallery and throwing leaflets have occurred in the past as well.

The nation has also witnessed an incident when some members carried pepper spray inside the House, he said in a reference to the chaotic scenes witnessed during the process to divide Andhra Pradesh to form the separate state of Telangana.

nto the Lok ber between 1991-94. There have been a dozen cases of people shouting slogans and throwing leaflets from the vis-

itors' galleries, they added. In 1983, a visitor shouted slogans and threw a slipper into the Rajya Sabha MPs' chamber. There are at least six instances of visitors shouting slogans and throwing pamphlets in the Upper House of Parliament.

CAT seeks Govt reply on plea by AIIMS doctor over non selection

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) has sought the Centre's stand on a plea by a doctor against his non-selection to the regular faculty post of assistant professor in geriatric medicine in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi.

The tribunal issued notice to the Centre and AIIMS on the plea by Dr Vijay Kumar who claimed his non-selection was arbitrary and liable to be set aside. "We issue notice to the respondents, returnable on 05.02.2024. Mr VSR Krishna and Mr Pradeep Kumar Sharma, learned counsel accept notice on behalf of their respective respondents," said the tribunal in an order dated December 14.

The plea said AIIMS, Delhi, had in 2021 advertised several regular faculty posts in various disciplines, and finding himself eligible, the doctor applied under the OBC category for the post of assistant professor but was not selected. He approached the institute's governing body with his grievance but it was turned down.

The plea stated that on the day the advertisement was



issued by AIIMS, the appli-"The biases and malafide in the selection process is also cant was already working there as assistant professor in revealed from the fact that the geriatric medicine departsame seven member Selection ment on contract. "The appli-Committee had recommendcant who fulfils the eligibilied the applicant's name to the ty criteria of the post, was Faculty post of Assistant Professor in Geriatric called for interview on 9.10.2022. The Standing Medicine on contractual basis Selection Committee, howearlier. "In fact, having gained the ever, did not recommend his experience after working with name for the post of Assistant the AIMS, New Delhi on con-Professor in Geriatric Medicine under the OBC cattractual basis, the Selection egory. The said post was Committee ought to have recommended the applicant's decided to be kept vacant," the

plea, filed through lawyer name to the regular post of Assistant Professor in Rajender Yadav, said. "A bare comparison of the Geriatric Medicine. Moreover, academic qualifications and while performing his duties of experiences of the applicant Assistant Professor in and the person who has been Geriatric Medicine on conrecommended for selection tractual basis, no short-comunder unreserved category ings have ever been reported would reveal that there has informed or any complaint has ever been made against been a biased and unfair approach in recommending the applicant," the plea said.

Disability Commissioner issues notice to Ola over ill treatment to para shooter

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Paking strict view at the violation of the rights of the "unfair", which could be seen persons with disability, the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Rajesh Aggarwal has view. The petition sought a direction to call for the issued notice to Ola Cabs for records of the selection ill-treatment meted out by one of its drivers to a para shooter, Wing Commander Shantanu who is suffering with 80% locomotor disability.

In his complaint to the CCPD under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the former Air Force officer stated that he booked an Ola cab to travel a small distance from Karni Singh Shooting Range, where he came to participate in the 1st Khelo India Para Games, to a location 3 kms away on Tuesday, December 12, 2023.

As there was no space in the rear boot space which was occupied by a CNG kit, his wife requested the driver to put the folded wheelchair in the back seat, which most of the sedan cab drivers allow.

As per the complaint, this particular driver, whose details were shared by the Complainant and have been withheld, aggressively behaved

with his wife and asked the couple to get out of the cab as he wouldn't keep and carry the wheelchair in his car.

Aggrieved and humiliated by this rude behaviour and slang language, the air force veteran approached the CCPD for action against the driver.

Considering the allegation to be an affront to the dignity of a person with disability who happens to be a soldier and also a sportsperson, the Chief Commissioner has sought a response from Ola within 30 days, according to the statement.

Dr Satendra Singh, a wellknown disability activist sup-ported the move saying that "It is heartening to see that the CCPD is taking prompt action which is much-needed from this statutory body."

He said that the sector has been facing such discrimination times and again. In fact, Ola has been discriminating against the disability sector as has been found from the rude behaviour from their drivers whenever any disabled person tries to hire the service. "The CCPD notice to Ola will encourage others in the sector to raise voice against apathetic cab aggregators," said Dr Singh.



Pak's election body sets general elections for Feb 8

 $T_{
m general}^{
m he\ schedule\ for\ Pakistan's}$ February 8 has been issued, hours after the Supreme Court quashed a lower court's decision which could have delayed the much-awaited polls.

The election schedule was issued on Friday night by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), within hours after the Supreme Court quashed a decision by the Lahore High Court (LHC) to suspend the appointment of officials from the bureaucracy to oversee the elections in defiance of the apex court's orders.

The LHC's verdict was issued on a petition filed by jailed former prime minister İmran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) - the same party that had called for timely polls in a plea filed in the Supreme Court.

Due to the LHC's order, Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa Election Chief Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja met with senior officials on Friday to ensure

that everything went according to plan.

Following detailed deliberations, the commission filed a petition in the top court seeking the annulment of the LHC's order. The Supreme Court accepted the plea a few hours back, putting the process back on track.

According to the ECP's notification, the nominations by the candidates can be filed with the Returning Officers (ROs) from December 20-22. The names of the nominated candidates would be published on December 23 and the scrutinv of their documents would be held from December 24-30. The last date for filing

appeals against the RO's decisions on rejecting or accepting nomination papers will be January 3 and the final date for deciding the appeals of candidates by an appellate tribunal will be January 10.

The revised list of candidates will be published on January 11 and the last date for withdrawing one's candidature is January 12. The election symbols will be allotted to added that the election pro-

Political parties welcome announcement Islamabad (PTI): All major political parties of Pakistan,

except the one led by Imran Khan, on Saturday welcomed the Supreme Court-prompted announcement of the schedule for the February 8 general elections, saying the apex court has foiled a 'major conspiracy' to delay the polls and 'saved democracy

Jailed former prime min-ister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, however, "continued to question the biases of bureaucrats to be appointed as poll officers," according to Dawn newspaper. But the party said it wants "timely, free and fair polls."

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announced the election schedule late on Friday night after the Supreme Court suspended an order by

political parties on January 13 with polls set for February 8. The electoral watchdog

continues to suffer from a

health and livelihood of mil-

Russia, Ukraine

drone attacks

ed drone attacks in the past

day, just hours after Hungary

vetoed 50 billion Euros (USD

54.5 billion) of EU funding to

Saturday that Ukrainian air

defense had shot down 30 out

of 31 drones launched

overnight against 11 regions of

Russia also said on Friday

Russian anti-aircraft units

most of the world considered

illegal, and has used it as a stag-

ing and supply point during the

Ministry said that six drones

had been shot down in the

Kursk region, which borders

In Ukraine's partially occu-

pied southern Kherson region,

Russian-installed governor

Vladimir Saldo reported on

Telegram that Russian anti-air-

craft units had downed at least

Stepped-up drone attacks

over the past month come as

both sides are keen to show they are not deadlocked as the

war approaches two years' duration. Neither side has

Earlier, Russia's Defense

Ukraine's air force said

exchange

AP KYIV

Ukraine.

war.

Ukraine.

of Henichesk.

lions of people.

atmosphere.

the Lahore High Court (LHC) on the appointment of bureaucrats as Returning Officers (ROs)

While hearing a plea by the PTI, the LHC on Wednesday suspended ECP's decision to appoint bureaucrats as Returning Officers (ROs) and district returning officers (DROs) for the February 8 elections, prompting it to approach the apex court. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president Shehbaz Sharif praised the Supreme Court as it "foiled PTI's conspiracy against democracy and the Constitution.

The Supreme Court's landmark decision to ensure Feb 8 polls will strengthen democracy and protect the Constitution." he posted on X. His post also alleged that

gramme shall also apply to the seats reserved for women and non-Muslims in the national and provincial assemblies.

"Imran Khan's PTI did not want polls." Khan and a number of his

party leaders have been jailed on multiple charges and have argued that there is no level playing field for their party to take part in the upcoming polls.

Observing that the SC verdict has removed "all hurdles" in timely elections, Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party Information Secretary Di Firdous Ashiq Awan posted on X, "The Supreme Court has saved democracy and ensured the supremacy of the Constitution for which we are thankful for it." PML-N leader Ishaq Dar

said holding polls was ÉCP's sole responsibility as the circumstances and the Constitution demanded timely elections.

"Last date of filling of a separate priority list for seats reserved for women and non-Muslims before the ROs is

December 22," the notification read.

After fresh delimitation, the National Assembly (NA) would consist of 336 seats, including 266 general seats, 60 seats reserved for women, and 10 for non-Muslims.

The delimitation shows that the strength of the Assembly has decreased by six seats from the previously 342 seats.

Earlier, in an informal chat with the journalists, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja said the ECP was fully prepared for the polls.

"I never said the election may be delayed," he said, adding that the ECP was fully prepared for polls.

The issuance of a detailed schedule removed the last bit of doubt about holding elections in the country on February 8 as the Supreme Court in orders suspending the LHC verdict stated that nobody would be allowed to derail the democracy and ordered the ECP to go ahead with its plan to organise the polls on the stated date.

WORLD BRIEFS

7 WOMEN INJURED IN MORTAR SHELL EXPLOSION IN PAK

world 05

PESHAWAR: Seven women were critically injured in a mortar shell explosion in Pakistan's restive northwest region, police said on Saturday. The incident took place in Habib Kot Adana, located in South Waziristan, within the jurisdiction of the Laddha police station on Friday. The incident took place when the women were collecting timber at a nearby mountain for domestic use during harsh cold weather, said Muhammad Shuaib, the Station House Officer (SHO) of Makeen police station. A mortar shell, fired from an undisclosed location, detonated with a powerful blast, critically injuring the seven women, he said. The injured victims were shifted to Razmak hospital in Wana, the SHO said, adding that the police are investigating the matter.

LANKA'S ECONOMY SHOWS POSITIVE GROWTH SINCE CRISIS

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's bankrupt economy has recorded a positive growth for the first time since the economic crisis hit the island nation, according to official data. "The year-on-year GDP growth rate for the third quarter has been reported as 1.6 per cent of positive growth rate," the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) said in a press release on Friday. Sri Lanka had recorded a minus 8 per cent growth when it declared bankruptcy in April 2022. The country's economy continued to be in the negative from the fourth quarter of 2021. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), which released the second tranche of its USD 2.9 billion bailout earlier this week, has said that Sri Lanka's overall growth for 2023 would remain negative. However, the country's economy in 2024 is expected to grow with a positive one plus growth, it said. Sri Lanka is currently going through a strict IMF based reform regime. President Ranil Wickremesinghe, who is also the finance minister, insists on reforms despite strong criticism from the opposition. The reforms, coupled with a high cost of living, are expected to play a significant role in the island's election year

Lahore receives first artificial rain to combat smog

PTI LAHORE

 $L^{ahore,\ one\ of\ the\ world's}_{most\ polluted\ cities,\ on}$ Saturday received its first artificial rain, following an experiment conducted by Pakistan's Punjab government with the help of the UAE to combat smog

Addressing a press confer-ence here, the Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that the experiment was conducted in 10 areas of Lahore and it was successful.

"Around 10 per cent of areas in Lahore received rainfall today due to cloud seeding experiments," he said, adding that at least 48 flares were

deployed for cloud seeding. "Light showers were witnessed in the 10 areas of 15 km radius. The results of the experiment are being further gauged," he said.

"Not a single penny was spent for the artificial rain. To combat smog, the government is ready to take any measure," the chief minister said. He also thanked the UAE government's help in initiating the artificial rain, also known as cloud seed-



ing, to wash away pollutants in world for the last month or so the air in the provincial capiwith unhealthy air quality. The second-largest city in Pakistan

Last month, local media reported that the Punjab province is planning to carry out an artificial rain experiment with China's help in Lahore, a project estimated to cost Rs 350 million in the cash-strapped country

Artificial rain is a weather modification technique that aims to stimulate precipitation. This is done by introducing different substances into clouds that further promote the

formation of raindrops. Lahore was among the worst polluted cities in the

China defends bounties offered for Hong Kong dissidents abroad

Beijing (AP): China on Friday defended controversial bounties offered for the capture of Hong Kong dissidents who have fled abroad that have been heavily criticized by foreign governments and human rights groups. Rewards of 1 million Hong Kong dollars (\$128,000) have been offered for information leading to the capture of 13 opposition figures accused of violating the semi-autonomous Chinese city's sweeping National Security Law. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said China rejected the smog crisis that has affected the outside criticism, saying the arrest orders were "necessary and justified and ... in line with The smog crisis in Lahore international law and practice."

and Punjab province is not a Without directly mentionnew phenomenon. It occurs ing the bounties, Mao said every year in October, other countries also have November and December extraterritorial aspects to their laws on national security, when the weather conditions adding that foreign govern-ments' support for those on the trap the pollutants in the lower list was merely cover for their According to a global enviaim of destabilizing Hong ronmental think tank, IQAir, Pakistan is the third-most pol-Kong, an Asian financial cenluted country in the world, and Lahore is the most polluted city. ter that was roiled by 2019 antigovernment protests

Kuwait's ruling emir dies at age 86 Dubai, Dec 16 (AP) Kuwait's ruling emir, the 86-year-old Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah, died Saturday after a three-year, low-key reign focused on trying to resolve the tiny, oil-rich nation's internal political disputes. Kuwait state television broke into programming

with Quranic verses just before a somber official made the announcement "With great sadness

and sorrow, we - the Kuwaiti people, the Arab and Islamic nations, and the friendly peoples of the world — mourn the late His Highness the emir, Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, who passed away to his Lord today," said Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah Al Sabah, the minister of his emiri court, who read the brief statement.

Authorities gave no cause of death.

Kuwait's deputy ruler and his half-brother, Sheikh Meshal Al Ahmad Al Jaber, now 83, is believed to be the world's oldest crown prince. He is in line to take over as Kuwait's ruler and represents one of the Gulf Arab countries' last octogenarian leaders.

In late November,

Sheikh Nawaf was rushed to a hospital for an unspecified illness. In the time since, Kuwait had been waiting for news about his health. State-run news previously reported that he travelled to the United States for unspecified medical checks in March 2021. viously served as Kuwait's inte-

The health of Kuwait's leaders remains a sensitive matter in the Middle Eastern nation also bordering Iraq and Saudi Arabia, which has seen internal power struggles behind palace doors.

Those from Sheikh Nawaf's lifetime, born before oil fully transformed Kuwait from a trading hub into a petrostate, have been fading away with age. That, as well as other Gulf Arab nations putting younger and more assertive rulers in power, has increasingly put more pressure on the Al Sabah to pass power onto the next generation.

In neighbouring Saudi Arabia, King Salman, 87, is widely believed to have placed day-to-day rule of his nation in the hands of his 38vear-old son, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Sheikh Nawaf was sworn in as emir in 2020 amid the coronavirus pandemic, following the death of his prede-cessor, the late Sheikh Sabah Al "Our main target is the liberation. After we return, we will repair our own house," Ahmad Al Sabah. The breadth and depth of emotion over the Sheikh Nawaf said in 1991. loss of Sheikh Sabah, known for "You have to reform yourself his diplomacy and peacemakand correct any previous mising, was felt across the region. takes?

He faced a demo-tion and then didn't hold a Cabinet-level position for about a decade afterward, serving as a deputy chief of the country's National Guard. Even on his return, analysts viewed him as not particularly active in government, though his low-key Sheikh had the third-shortest tenure of any emir since the Al Sabah ruled Kuwait beginning in

During his term, he had been focused on domestic issues as the nation struggled through political disputes including the overhaul of Kuwait's welfare system which prevented the sheikhdom from taking on debt.

'Hostages mistakenly killed by troops were holding a white flag'

rior and defence minister. His political fortunes were never certain despite being part of the ruling Al Sabah family. As defence minister, Sheikh Nawaf oversaw the rapid collapse of his forces during Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's invasion of

1752

Sheikh Nawaf pre-

his country in August 1990. He

faced widespread criticism for

his decisions during the war.

sent to the country's ruler at the

time alleged Sheikh Nawaf

ordered tank crews not to fire

on the approaching Iraqi forces. The reasoning behind the

alleged order remains unclear.

Iraq's battle-hardened forces,

after years at war with Iran, eas-

ily overwhelmed the country.

tional force later expelled the

Iraqis from Kuwait in

Operation Desert Storm. The

Al Sabah never published the

findings of its investigations

into the government's actions

around the invasion

A letter reportedly

A US-led, multina-

approach later appealed to some Kuwaitis who ultimately moved on from his wartime performance. Nawaf was largely an uncontroversial choice for emir, though his advancing age led analysts to suggest his tenure would be short. It was - he

plan to return looted antiquities

Cambodia welcomes NY Museum's

AP PHNOM PENH

ambodia has welcomed the announcement that New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art will return more than a dozen pieces of ancient artwork to Cambodia and Thailand that were tied to an art dealer and collector accused of running a huge antiquities trafficking network out of Southeast Asia.

This most recent repatriation of artwork comes as many museums in the United States and Europe reckon with collections that contain objects looted from Asia, Africa and other places during centuries of colonialism or in times of upheaval.

Fourteen Khmer sculptures will be returned to Cambodia and two will be returned to Thailand, the Manhattan museum announced Friday, though no specific timeline was given.

"We appreciate this first step in the right direction," said statement issued by Cambodia's Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts. "We look forward to further returns and acknowledgements of the truth regarding our lost national treasures, taken from

and genocide.' Čambodia suffered from war and the brutal rule of the communist Khmer Rouge in the 1970s and 1980s, causing disorder that opened the opportunity for its archaeo-

Cambodia in the time of war

logical treasures to be looted. The repatriation of the ancient pieces was linked to well-known art dealer

Douglas Latchford, who was indicted in 2019 for allegedly orchestrating a mul-tiyear scheme to sell looted Cambodian antiquities on the international art market. Latchford, who died the following year, had denied any

involvement in smuggling. The museum initially cooperated with the US attortheir return.

the New York office of Homeland Security Investigations on the return of Russia and Ukraine each reported dozens of attempt-13 sculptures tied to Latchford before determining there were three more that should be repatriated.

ney's office in Manhattan and

"As demonstrated with today's announcement, pieces linked to the investigation of Douglas Latchford continue to reveal themselves," HSI Acting Special Agent in Charge Erin Keegan said in a statement

Ern. Friday. "The the country. Metropolitan evening that it had thwarted a Museum of Art has not only series of Ukrainian drone recognised the significance of these 13 Khmer artifacts, which attacks.

were shamelessly stolen, but has destroyed 32 Ukrainian drones also volunteered to return them, as part of their ongoing over the Crimean peninsula, cooperation, to their rightful the Russian Defense Ministry owners: the People of said on Telegram. Russia Cambodia. annexed the peninsula from This isn't the first time the Ukraine in 2014, a move that

museum has repatriated art linked to Latchford. In 2013, it returned two objects to Cambodia.

The Latchford family also had a load of centuries-old Cambodian jewellery in their possession that they later returned to Cambodia.

In February, 77 pieces of jewellery made of gold and other precious metal pieces including items such as crowns, necklaces and earrings - were returned to their homeland. Other stone and bronze artifacts were returned in September 2021.

Pieces being returned include a bronze sculpture called The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara Seated in Royal Ease, made sometime Saturday. between the late 10th century

and early 11th century. Another piece of art, made of stone in the seventh century and named Head of Buddha,

will also be returned. Those pieces are part of 10 that can still be viewed in the

gained much ground despite a Ukrainian counteroffensive museum's galleries while that began in June, and analysts arrangements are made for predict the war will be a long

AP JERUSALEM

Three Israeli hostages who I were mistakenly shot by Israeli troops in the Gaza Strip had been waving a white flag and were shirtless when they were killed, an Israeli military official said on Saturday.

Anger over the mistaken killings is likely to increase pressure on the Ísraeli government to renew Qatar-mediated negotiations with Hamas over swapping more captives for Palestinians imprisoned in Israel.

Hamas has conditioned further releases on Israel halting its punishing air and ground campaign in Gaza, now in its 11th week.

The account of how the hostages died also raised questions about the conduct of Israeli ground troops. Palestinians on several occasions reported that Israeli soldiers opened fire as civilians tried to flee to safety.

The military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to brief reporters in line with military regulations, said it was likely that the hostages had been abandoned by their militant captors or had escaped. The soldiers' behaviour was "against our rules of engagement," the official said, and was being investigated at the highest level.

The three, all young men in their 20s, were killed on Friday

Smoke rises following an Israeli bombardment in the Gaza Strip, as seen from southern Israel on Saturday

Communications blackout, spiralling hunger compound misery in Gaza

AP 📕 RAFAH

A prolonged communica-tions blackout that severed telephone and internet connections compounded the misery on Saturday in the besieged Gaza Strip, where a United Nations agency said hunger levels had spiralled in recent days

Internet and telephone

evening and were still inaccessible on Saturday morning, according to internet access advocacy group NetBlocks.org, hampering aid deliveries and rescue efforts as Israel's war against Gaza's ruling militant group Hamas stretched into

he 11th week. 'The internet blackout is ongoing, and based on our records it is the longest such

month war, said Alp Toker, the group's director.

The United Nations' humanitarian affairs department said communications with Gaza were "severely disrupted" due to damage to telecommunications lines in the south.

The offensive, triggered by the unprecedented Oct 7 Hamas attack on Israel, has flattened much of northern

City area Shijaiyah, where troops have engaged in fierce fighting with Hamas militants in recent days. They had been among more than 240 people taken hostage during an unprecedented raid by Hamas into Israel on Óctober 7 in which around 1,200 people were killed, mostly civilians. The attack sparked the war. Hundreds of protesters blocked Tel Aviv's main highway late Friday in a spontaneous demonstration calling for the hostages' return. The hostages' plight has dominated public discourse in Israel since the October 7 attack. Their families have led a powerful public campaign calling on the government to do more to bring them home.

Gaza and driven 85% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million from their homes.

Displaced people have squeezed into shelters mainly in the south in a spiralling

humanitarian crisis. In their Oct 7 attack, Hamas militants killed about 1,200 people in Israel, most of them civilians, and took more than 240 hostage.

On Friday, Israeli troops mistakenly shot and killed three Israeli hostages in the Gaza City area of Shijaiyah, where troops have been engaged in fierce fighting with Hamas militants in recent days.

incident" in the over-twolines went down Thursday

15 aerial targets near the town Voter apathy, concerns about violence mark Iraqi's elections Meanwhile, shelling wounded two people in Ukrainian-held parts of the

Kherson region, regional Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin said AP BAGHDAD

I raqis began voting for the first time in a decade on Saturday to select new provincial council members, who in turn will appoint governors, with the outcome seen as a bellwether for the parliamentary elections due to take place in 2025.

Saturday's vote was restricted to military and security personnel and internally displaced people living in camps, with the main polling set to take place on Monday. Results are expected

to be announced on Tuesday. Concerns were raised about a low voter turnout and potential violence spreading in the long-awaited polls taking place in the country's 18 provinces.

The powerful Shiite cleric and political leader Muqtada al-Sadr — who officially resigned from politics in 2022 amid a lengthy deadlock over cabinet formation - has called on his supporters to boycott the provincial elections, saying that their participation would reinforce the dominance of a corrupt political class.

A widespread boycott would "reduce the legitimacy of the elections internationally and internally," Sadr

said in a statement. In some areas, Sadr's supporters ripped down electoral posters while several political campaign offices were vandalized. In the southern city of Najaf a bastion of Sadr support — thousands marched on Thursday to urge a boycott of the elections.

Activists who staged mass anti-government protests in 2019 and are opposed to all the ruling parties also

widely vowed to sit the polls out.

Apart from those actively boycotting the elections, many are simply apathetic. Sajad Jiyad, an Iraqi political analyst and fellow at the non-partisan think tank, The Century Foundation, pointed out that millions of eligible voters are not even registered, and low turnout has been a trend since 2005.

"All signs point to apathy among the neral population," he said. "Young people in particular are not engaged with politics, and no party has captured their imagination."



13 States, UTs achievers in logistics performance index

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

ndhra Pradesh, Karna-taka, Tamil Nadu, Chan-Adigarh, and Gujarat are among the 13 states and Union Territories that have again been categorised as "achievers" in the logistics index chart 2023, according to a report released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry on Saturday.

The index is an indicator of the efficiency of logistical services necessary for promoting exports and economic growth

As against 15 states and UTs, this year, the number has reduced to 13 as Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand have slipped into "aspirers" and "fast movers" categories, respectively, this year. Steps taken by Sikkim and Tripura have helped them move up the ladder to the "achievers"

category from "fast movers" in holders and includes suggestive recommendations, according to

The other states and UTs in the "achievers" category are Delhi, Assam, Haryana, Punjab, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh. Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttara khand, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep, and Puducherry have been categorised as

"fast movers" in the report. Those in the "aspirers" category include Goa, Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Jammu and

Kashmir, and Ladakh. The report ranks states on the basis of their logistics ecosystem, highlights the key logistics-related challenges faced by the stake-

the fifth LEADS (Logistics Ease Across Different States) 2023 report unveiled by Commerce

and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. The index aims at enhancing focus on improving logistics performance across states, which is essential for improving the country's trade and reducing

transaction costs. Goval said the logistics sector will play a key role in taking the country's economy to about USD 35 trillion by 2047.

Citing a report of economic think tank NCAER, he said the country's logistics cost is estimated in the range of 7.8 per cent to 8.9 per cent. "Going forward, the aim to

bring it down to the 5-6 per cent level is certainly doable," he



said, adding that the government has taken a series of measures, such as investing huge amounts in infrastructure development to help promote cut logistics costs. He suggested the industry to focus on skilled manpower, enhanced participation of states, use of new technologies like AI, blockchain and data analytics, and steps to reduce carbon footprint will further help in the growth of the country's logistics sector.

The minister said the LEADS report will play a pivotal role in instilling healthy competition among states/UTs to enhance logistics performance.

LEADS was conceived on the lines of the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) of the World Bank in 2018. While the LPI relies entirely on perceptionbased surveys, LEADS incorporates perception and objectivity, thereby enhancing the robustness and comprehensiveness of this exercise.

The report assesses states' performance across the key pillars of Logistics Infrastructure, Logistics Services and Operating and Regulatory Environment, and empowers the state/UT governments by providing region-specific insights for informed decision-making and comprehensive growth.

It is based on a pan-India primary survey conducted between May and July 2023, covering over 7,300 responses across 36 states/UTs.

Additionally, over 750 stake-holder consultations, facilitated by National, Regional, and State Associations, significantly contributed to this comprehensive evaluation

Using of sugarcane juice for making ethanol approved

PTI NEW DELHI

The food ministry has issued a fresh order reversing ban on the use of sugarcane juice for making ethanol and allowed utilisation of the juice as well as B-heavy molasses to produce the green fuel in the 2023-24 supply vear.

The revised order comes days after the Centre on December 7 banned use of sugarcane juice and sugar syrup for the 2023-24 supply year (November-October) in an order to ensure ade quate sugar supply in the domestic market and check prices.

In a directive issued to all sugar mills and distilleries, the ministry said the oil marketing companies (OMCs) will issue a "revised allocation" of "sugarcane juice and B heavy molassesbased ethanol" for the 2023-24 supply year to "each distillerv". OMCs have been asked to inform the food ministry afte

heavy molasses 'No diversion of sugarcane juice and B heavy molasses is allowed for production of rectified spirit and extra neutral alcohol," the directive said. All molasses-based distilleries will endeavour to make ethanol from C-heavy molasses, it

added. A decision in this regard, Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said, was taken in the meeting of a committee of ministers held on Friday.

He said the government has decided to give flexibility to use both cane juice and B heavy molasses within a overall cap on diversion of sugar of up to 17 lakh tonnes in the current 2023-24 supply year. Already 6 lakh tonnes of sugar

has been diverted for making ethanol from cane juice before the ban, another food ministry official had said.

FCI sells 4.29 lakh MT wheat in Bengal through e-auction

PTI KOLKATA

The Food Corporation India (FCI) has sold 4.29 lakh metric tonnes of wheat and 14,760 metric tonnes of non-fortified rice through 25 open market e-auctions in West Bengal from June to December this year, an official of the agency said on Saturday.

FCI Deputy General Manager (West Bengal region) Pradeep Singh said the Open Market Sales Scheme (domestic) had been done through the e-auction portal of M-junction. "In a bid to stabilise the prices of the cereals and also to increase affordability for the general public, the FCI has sold 4.29 lakh metric tonnes of wheat and 14,760 metric tonnes of non-fortified rice in West Bengal through 25 open-market e-auctions from June to December this year," Singh said.

The FCI will also continue to supply the staples through the public distribution system (PDS) free of cost, he said. While the reserve price of wheat for e-auction sales is Rs 2,150 per quintal, it is Rs 2,900 per quintal for non-fortified rice. Singh said fortified rice is supplied through the

PDS only, and not via the e-auction route. West Bengal is a wheat-deficit state but self-suf-

ficient in rice production. For the state, wheat is procured from Haryana, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh at the prevailing minimum support price

PTI NEW DELHI

In a regulatory filing, Adani Enterprises — the firm that

a 50 50 per cent stake

(MSP) of Rs 2,275 per quintal for marketing sea son 2024-25," he said

While wheat is procured from the farmers dur ing the Rabi season, rice is purchased during the Kharif season, he said. According to the official differentiation in the quantum of purchase of wheat and rice through the e-auction route has also been made for big and small processing units. Singh said the FCI has also asked the processors not to hold stocks over and above the monthly pro-cessing capacity while bidding for tenders.

He said the next scheduled e-auction will be held on December 20, when 30,000 metric tonnes of wheat and 9,000 metric tonnes of non-fortified rice will be offered for sale through the open market route in West Bengal.

Every week, a similar amount of wheat is offered for sale through the open market, he added.

Adani acquires majority stake in IANS

 $B_{group\,has\,acquired\,a\,major-}^{illionaire}$ ity stake in news agency IANS India Pvt Ltd for an undisclosed sum as the group expands its presence in the media space.

holds the group's media interest - said its subsidiary "AMG Media Networks Ltd has

when it acquired Quintillion Business Media, which operates business and financial news digital media platform BQ Prime. It thereafter in December took nearly 65 per cent stake in broadcaster NDTV.

AMNL was the vehicle for these acquisitions as well. In the filing, it said, "AMNL has also signed a shareholders' agreement with IANS and Sandeep Bamzai, a shareholder ofIA to record

with AMNL and AMNL will have the right to appoint all directors of IANS," the filing said. "Pursuant to the acquisition as set out above, IANS is now a subsidiary of AMNL."

A first-generation entrepreneur, Adani started off as a commodities trader in 1988 and expanded his business interests to become India's largest private player in infrastructure, with 13 ports and eight airports. Over vears it ducing coal, energy distribution, data centres and more recently into cement and copper. It even bid and acquired 5G telecom spectrum to set up a private network



Honda Elevate crosses 20,000 sales mark

PTI NEW DELHI

Honda Cars India on Saturday said its mid-sized Sports Utility Vehicle Elevate has crossed 20,000 sales mark since its launch in the domestic market in September this year.

The new model accounted for over 50 per cent of total company sales in the last three months and has helped the company grow its sales by 11 per cent in the September-November period as compared with the same period last year, the automaker said in a statement.

"We have maximised the production of the Elevate to serve our waiting customers as early as possible and adjusted the vari ant mix to align with the market demand which is over whelmingly high for CVT vari-ants currently," Honda Cars India Director (Marketing and Sales) Yuichi Murata said.

India is the first country to manfacture and the globally. Honda also aims to make India an important export hub for the new model to other parts of the world, catering to the robust demand for SUVs globally

ESIC to set up 9 hospitals in Maharashtra, MP, Uttarakhand



PTI NEW DELHI

Ecorporation (ESIC) has decided to set up nine hospitals in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and 17 new dispensaries in Gujarat. The decision was taken in the 192nd Meeting of Employees' State Insurance Corporation held on Friday at ESIC Headquarters under the Chairmanship of Union Minister for Labour and Employment Bhupender Yadav. Minister of State for Labour and Employment, Petroleum and Natural Gas Rameswar Teli also attended the meeting as Vice-

Chairman. According to a labour ministry statement issued late in the evening on Friday, nine new ESI hospitals in Maharashtra, Madhva Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and 17 new dispensaries in Gujarat will be set up under the ESI Scheme to improve the healthcare infrastructure.

To neutralise the impact of inflation, the proposal to Permanent Disablement Benefit (PDB) and Dependant's Benefit (DB) was also approved by ESI Corporation, the statement said. The PDB is paid at the rate of 90 per cent of wages in the form of

monthly payments, depending upon the extent of loss of earning capacity as certified by a Medical Board The DB is paid at the rate of 90

per cent of the wage in the form of monthly payment to the dependants of a deceased insured person in cases where death occurs due to employment injury or occupational hazards. However, the statement did not mention the earlier rate of PDB and DB.

The ESIC also decided to increase the number of beds in its hospitals in Bibvewadi, Maharashtra, and Rourkela, Odisha.

The sanctioned bed strength is set to increase from 100 to 120 and from 75 to 150 in ESIC hospital in Bibvewadi and Rourkela, respectively, as ESI Corporation accorded the approval for the same during the meeting, the statement noted.

To provide all the super special-ity treatment facilities hassle-free and under one roof, the propos al for the development of ESIC Hospital Andheri, Mumbai, as a multi-speciality hospital with a canacity of 500

placement of revised contracts. After receiving the revised allocation, sugar mills and distilleries have been asked to supply ethanol strictly as per the revised quantity of cane juice and B-

sugar production to decline to 32.3-33 million tonnes in the 2023-24 season (October-September) as against 37.3 million tonnes in the previous season

mment

constituting equity shares of IANS India Pvt Ltd." The company did not disclose the acquisition price. Adani had forayed into media business in March last year

rights with respect to IANS." IANS had a revenue of Rs 11.86 crore in the fiscal year 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023). "All operational and manage ment control of IANS will be approved, it stated. The step is taken to modernise the facilities in the hospital to provide IPs (insured persons) and their dependents with modern treatment facilities.

Reliance General Insurance unveils global health policy

PTI NEW DELHI

Reliance General Insurance Company RLtd (RGICL) on Saturday said it has launched a new policy to make global healthcare accessible to Indians. The policy, Reliance Health Global, provides comprehensive cover not only within the borders of India but across the world, RGICL said in a statement. The policy will cover expenses for overseas treatment, including critical illness-

es like cancer and bypass surgery, it added. It also encompasses travel, accommoda-

tion, and end-to-end Visa and assistance



services, addressing emergencies like lost passports or emergency cash, apart from sum-insured coverage of up to USD 1 million, the company said. The new product also offers benefits

ranging from air ambulance to organ donor expenses with no restrictions on room rent.

"As India globalises and a lot of Indians keep travelling abroad for work or leisure it's imperative to remove their pain of buying multiple policies separately for India and overseas," Reliance General Insurance CEO Rakesh Jain said.

Reliance General Insurance, a subsidiary of Reliance Capital, is one of India's lead ing general insurance companies.

The company offers a well-rounded and comprehensive bouquet of products, including motor insurance, health insurance, travel insurance, and home insurance.

Volkswagen ties up with Govt for its vehicle scheme

PTI CHENNAI

utomaker Volkswagen India Ahas partnered with Centre's Kendriya Police Kalyan Bhandar scheme to offer its products to personnel of central security agencies and their families. Under this initiative, Volkswagen India is making its entire range of cars available to beneficiaries of the KPKB scheme across the country.

The KPKB scheme was launched as a welfare initiative by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2006. It caters to serving and retired members of the Central



Armed Police Forces and their families. Aimed at enhancing the accessibility of its portfolio of cars, this new initiative enables beneficiaries to experience

world-class mobility with an even more reasonable price tag, the company said in a statement. Volkswagen retails the mid-size sedan Virtus, sports utility vehicle Taigun, and its premium SUV Tiguan in India.

Some of the security forces covered under the scheme include the Border Security Forces, Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, and Indo-Tibetan Border Force among others.

The scheme benefits are also extended to the personnel of State Police Forces, the Railway Protection Force, the Intelligence Bureau, the Special Protection Group, the National Crime Records Bureau, and the National Investigation Agency, it added.

	5	THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD. SCO 153-155. SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX NO. 0172-5041812,66 Notice Inviting Tender www.verka.coop			
/Se	aled tenders are hereby Invited for the purchase and supply of followin				
Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty			
1.	For Verka Head Office, Chandigarh Caustic Soda Lye	Annual/ 755 MT			
2.	 For Verka Jalandhar Dairy a) Outsourcing of all activites of city supply dispatch dock. b) Hiring of insulated Road Milk tankers for Transportation of milk BMC's/MCC's.(Capacity 10,000 kgs) 	Annual 01.02.2024 to 31.03.2025/ 05 No's			
3.	For Verka Amritsar Dairy Sealed tender for hiring of vehicle for supply of fresh milk & milk products on cash and carry basis at bhikiwind and surrounding areas.(Distance Approx. 200 Km)	01 No.			
4.	For Verka Ludhiana Dairy Supply of PVC Material for packing 8 gm Table Butter.	Half yearly			
5.	For Verka Sangrur Dairy Pest Control Services.	Annual			
6.	For Verka Faridkot Dairy Hiring the outsource Agency for the different vacant sanctioned posts of milk union Faridkot as per requirement.	-			
7.	For Verka Ferozepur Dairy Supply of:- • Manpower • Freshly cut firewood for boiler	Two years 550 Tons			
8.	For Verka Cattle Feed Plant, Ghania-Ke-Banger Fire Wood(Fresh Cut)	Annual/12000 Qtls			

For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. www.verka.coop e Tendering portal i.e. eproc.punjab.gov.in.
 Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

Dy. General Manager (Purchase

Employees feel short nap breaks essential: Survey

large number of employees believe that short nap breaks ring office hours help battle igue and also increase efficienand well-being of workers, cording to a survey ne practice of 'inemuri', which volves taking short nap breaks

aring office hours while maining present in the workace, has been a long-standing adition in Japan

is essential for a healthy work lture, battling exhaustion and tigue in daily work routines ad increase efficiency and ployees' well-being, said a reort by staffing solutions and R services provider Genius onsultants

Around 94 per cent of employees surveyed believe that short nap breaks during office hours are essential, whereas only 3 per cent of the respondents disagreed with this sentiment, the report said. This highlights the stress and

burnout scenario experienced by employees on a regular basis, which makes them want resting breaks during work hours, it added.

The report is based on an online survey among 1,207 employees from September 25 to October 27, across sectors, including banking and finance, construction and engineering, education, FMCG, hospitality, HR solu-tions, IT, ITES and BPO, logistics, manufacturing, media, oil and gas, and pharma.

The report further said that 82 per cent of respondents believe short nap breaks in the office can lead to an increase in overall work efficiency. However, 12 per cent do not share the same view. Meanwhile, the report also found that 60 per cent of employees frequently experi-



ence high levels of exhaustion and fatigue throughout their daily work routines On the other hand, 27 per cent

of respondents said they never encountered such pronounced feelings of tiredness during their workdays, it said.

Nearly half of the employees (49

believe 'inemuri' can contribute to work satisfaction and enhance employee well-being.

Over 64 per cent employees believe that short nap breaks after office hours can help individuals achieve a better work-life balance, while 21 per cent do not see any benefit of 'inemuri', the report said.

"The findings of our recent report shed light on the evolving attitudes towards workplace well-being. The data, showcasing an overwhelming 94 per cent of employees supporting short nap breaks during office hours, demonstrates the growing acceptance of this practice in

today's work culture. These insights reveal the potential for enhancing work efficiency, fostering employee satisfaction, and achieving a healthier work-life balance," Genius Consultants Chairman and Managing Director R P Yadav said.

this proposition. At least 78 per cent employees

per cent) expressed their willing-

ness to extend their working

hours by one hour if they are

provided with a one-hour nap

break during office hours.

However, 36 per cent of respon-

dents are not comfortable with



KHELO INDIA PARA GAMES ARMLESS ARCHER DEVI CLINCHES GOLD



PTI NEW DELHI

rmless archer Sheetal A Devi continued her stun-ning form as she won a

gold medal in the Open category of compound section at the inaugural Khelo India Para Games here on Saturday. ver w Sheetal's score of 141 was just here.

122n

HAMPI

th DECEMBE

0

enough to ward off a serious challenge from Uttar Pradesh's Jyoti Baliyan, who won the silver with 138, at the JLN Stadium

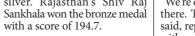
Sheetal, who won two medals, including a gold, at her maiden Asian Para Games in Hangzhou recently, did not have it easy. She had to dig deep into her skills

and mental strength to pip Jyoti in a thrilling finish. Sarita from Haryana won bronze with a score of 137.

Paralympians Harvinder Singh of Haryana and Vivek Chikara of Uttar Pradesh also finished among the medals in recurve archery. While Harvinder won gold, Chikara settled for silver and Sahil from Haryana won the bronze

bronze. Tokyo Paralympics silver medal-list Bhavina Patel of Gujarat clinched gold in women's Class 4 table tennis event as she beat statemate Usha Rathod 3-0 (11-7 11-1 11-8) in the final. Birmingham Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Sonal Patel added another table tennis gold for Gujarat as she beat Bihar's Vidya Kumari 3-0 (11-3 11-1 11-2) in the final of women's Class 1-3 event. Hangzhou Asian Para Games

Hangzhou Asian Para Games silver winner Rudransh Khandelwal of Rajasthan continued his good form on the final day at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range, as he claimed the gold medal in the men's 50m pistol SH1 event with a score of 223.4. Khandelwal, who holds the world record in the same event, surpassed Haryana's Singhraj (216.4) who settled for silver. Rajasthan's Shiv Ra Sankhala won the bronze meda





PTI KOLKATA

India's Rohit and Nepal's Subhash Tamang beat their respective opponents on Saturday to set up a summit clash in the All-India Amateur Golf

Championship here. Rohit, who has played on numerous Indian Golf Union teams, beat Jordan Clay Burnand of South Africa 2 & 1 in the semi-final at the RCGC here.

In the other semi-final, Tamang, who is trained by former Indian pro Tarun Sardesai, beat top seeded Altin Van Der Merwe of South Africa 3 & 1.

The final will be played over 36 holes in two sessions on Sunday

Rohit and Tamang were seeded third and fourth respectively after the strokeplay. Van Der Merwe topped the 36-hole strokeplay section while Shat Mishra was second

While Shat lost in the pre-quarterfinals, Van der e's run came

Rohit beat Rohan Singh Rana 3 & 1 in the first round and then added the scalp of Anshul Khabthiyal 3 & 2. Thereafter in the quarter-finals, he moved past Jujhar Singh on the 18th hole. He beat South Africa's Burnand 2&1 in the semifinals.

The match play segment was arrived at following 36-hole stroke play segment. The top 32 players moved into the second stage with 16 pairings in Round 1.

in Round 1. The team event, which forms part of the stroke play, was won by South Africans Van der Merwe and Jordan Clay Burnand with a total of 2-under 286. India's Sandeep

Yadav and Rohit were second at 294 and India 'B' comprising Vinamra Anand and Shaurya Bhattacharya were third at 295.

The All India Amateur Championships is the country's oldest golf tournament having started in 1892. The Championships were not held during the two World War and was cancelled once 2020 due to COVID-19

PNS NEW DELHI

The prestegious All India Civil Services Swimming Competition are being organ-ised by Delhi Government from December 15 to 17, 2023. The event brings together civil servants from across the nation to showcase their aquatic prowess.

On the occasion, Deputy Director (Sports) Yogesh Pal raced occasion and

assured full cooperation and support for the dedicated sportspersons. To commemorate their achievements, Yogesh Pal presented participants with well-deserved medals, symbolising their dedication to both service and athletic prowess. The games will end on 17th December and the team winning maximum level will be awarded with team champi-



Tiger, son get another crack at PNC Championship

Charlie, whose high school team won the Class A state

championship, carries the load. He is not the little crumb-

Championship in 2020 at age 11. He is taller and stronger,

with more speed in his swing and plenty of pop.

Charlie has been moved back to

a set of tees, just one in front of

his father. He will be playing

The Ritz-Carlton Club at 6,576

vards, the same set of tees used by Steve Stricker and Jim Furyk, and Nelly Korda from the

"I can't quite give him as much brief anymore because he's close to beating me up," Thomas said. "It's impressive from a golfer standpoint because he's still a 14-year-old, but maturing in the sense of his golf game, and he's more willing to learn

and he's more willing to learn and he's open to it all times. "I'm just glad he keeps moving back tee markers. He's leading

the tournament in inches

grown." He has a pretty good

teacher in his father, even at this

The PNC Championship, which starts Friday, is only the fourth

competition this year for

Woods. He made the cut, but

didn't finish the third round of

the Masters, and then had ankle

fusion surgery shortly thereafter.

Woods returned sooner than he

expected at the Hero World

stage in his career.

LPGA Tour.

AP ■ ORLANDO, FLORIDA (USA)

 $N_{jokingly\ refers\ to\ the\ PNC}^{o\ wonder\ Tiger\ Woods}$ major.

Woods was together with 14-year-old son Charlie on Friday, their swings eerily similar and the encouraging words coming as only Woods can deliver them. They were warming up ahead of the pro-am, hitting flop shots, when Charlie hit one that was ... Well, let Woods explain.

"We're ending on that one right there. That was nasty," Woods said, repeating the second part with an extra word for empha-

Sis. Woods felt good enough to turn down a golf cart and walk 18 holes in a strong wind during the pro-am, which is not to suggest he is completely on the mend.

"I felt like I was physically fit to do it," Woods said. "Also, walk-ing is better for my back. I just wanted to keep it loose and keep it going, and we're having so much it doesn't really matter." Woods chose not to speak to the media, wanting to avoid any queries about his place on the PGA Tour board as it negotiates commercial deals with the Saudi backer of LIV Golf - the deadline is about two weeks away and a private investment group of powerful US sports team owners

This is the fourth year Woods is playing with Charlie. They were runner-up two years ago and while Woods repeatedly talks about "having a blast," get-ting the Willie Park Trophy that goes to the winners would have its place among some 100 wins worldwide.

Challenge in the Bahamas two weeks ago. He finished 18th in the 20-man field, and it was fair "Winning majors is unbelievable and how he's won his majors," Justin Thomas said. to speculate that he was using that to warm up for the big one "But, seeing how much he cares about Charlie and having - the PNC Championship. (daughter) Sam out here a

him doing that together with Charlie as he's watching him rust off there at the Hero," Woods said. "My hands felt bet-ter with control hitting shots. grow up, it would a very, very And, especially today, with the wind blowing as hard as it was, I was able to hit flighted shots different kind of win that does-n't maybe come with the record books and history." The question is how much

nicely, which was not quite as sharp as I wanted to be at Hero? The big concern is the weather. The wind was enough to shake snatcher - a term Woods' father trees, and rain is in the forecast affectionately used for him - that first played in the PNC

over the next couple of days. Starting times have been moved up. Everyone will be in a cart, as this is run by the PGA Tour Champions. Woods has caddied for his son

one of those events is what gave him the green light to play in the Bahamas - and watched In the Bahamas - and watched him develop. He has taught him about the process of deciding how to hit shots, and the kid sounds inquisitive. "And some-times, he doesn't see it the way I saw, which is fun," Woods said. Part of that relationship is giv-ing Charlie space to figure it out on his own, golf and life, though Woods said he also provides

what he called "guardrails." "There's so much of the noise in our lives that people are always trying to get stuff out of us, and my job as a parent is to protect him from a lot of that stuff," Woods said.

"Then again, as a teenager, I want him to try and become his own man at the same time. So, it's a challenge as a parent and to provide that atmosphere for him, to learn, to grow, and have that freedom, meanwhile understanding that there's so much noise looking into our lives." Woods said it was differ-ent for him at that age, mainly because there were no phones and cameras at every turn and

no social media. On the topic of phones came a pet peeve.

I just don't like the fact that he stares at his phone all the time,"





PTI CUTTACK

Halep hasn't spoken to Mouratoglou in months AP PARIS

Two-time Grand Slam cham-L pion Simona Halep is no longer working with coach Patrick Mouratoglou's academy while she awaits a ruling on her appeal of a four-year doping suspension and figures her tennis career will be over if the Court of Arbitration for Sport rules against her.

"Four years is going to be a lot for my age," Halep, a 32-year-old from Romania who has been No. 1 in the WTA rankings, said in an interview with euronews posted online on Friday. 'It's catastrophic if it's going to

be four years," she said. "And I don't know how I will handle it. Probably it's going to be (the) end of (my) career, yes." A three-day hearing with the Court of Arbitration for Sport is scheduled for February 7-9 in her appeal against the International Tennis Integrity Agency, which ruled that Halep "committed intentional anti

doping rule violations." Halep tested positive for the drug Roxadustat at the 2022 US Open and also was cited for irregularities in her biological passport. Roxadustat stimulates the body to produce more of the natural hormone erythropoietin, or EPO, which has long been a doping product favoured by cyclists and distance runners.

World Junior champi-onships bronze medallist Ayush Shetty edged out Indonesia's Alwi Farhan in a thrilling three-game match to set up an all-Indian final against Sathish Kumar Karunakaran at

the Odisha Masters Super 100 badminton tournament here on Saturday Ayush had lost to Farhan in the semifinals of the World Junior

Championships to settle for a bronze in Spokane, US. On Saturday, the 18-year-old from Karnataka rallied his way to a 19-21, 21-14, 22-20 win to

avenge the loss and enter his maiden Super 100 final here. On Sunday, Ayush will be up against compatriot Sathish, who will also be playing his first Super 100 final of his interna-tional career. He entered the summit clash after beating fellow Indian and defending champion Kiran George 18-21, 14-21 in a 41-minute semifinal. The final tournament of the

2023 BWF World tour season will have Indian representation in four out of five finals with Unnati Hooda being the only one to miss out in women's sin-

She lost 16-21 5-21 to former world champion and Olympic medallist Nozomi Okuhara of Japan.

India's Tanisha Crasto and Ashwini Ponnappa also advanced to women's doubles final with a 21-17 21-13 win over Indonesians Arlya Nabila Thesa Munggaran and Agnia Sri Rahayu in the semifinal. It was their third final in as many weeks

The Indian pair had reached the finals of Sved Modi International Super 300 in Lucknow before winning the Guwahati Masters super 100 last week Second seeds and world No. 24

Indian pair will face another Indonesian combination Meilysa Trias Puspitasari and Rachel Allessya Rose in the summit clash.

Tanisha will also compete in

ODISHA MASTERS



mixed doubles final after she and pair of Krishna Prasad Garaga her partner Dhruv Kapila and Sai PRratheek K also prorecorded a 21-14, 21-14 victory over Denmark's third seed Mads gressed to the final with a superb 21-17 17-21 21-18 win over Indonesian eighth seeds Teges Vestergaard and Christine Busch in the semifinals. Satriaji Cahyo Hutomo and

Tanisha and Kapila will meet top Christopher David Wijaya. They will square off against seeds Hee Yong Kai Terry and seventh seeded Lin Bing-Wei Tan Wei Han Jessica of Singapore in the summit clash. and Su Ching Heng of Chinese Sixth seeded Indian doubles Taipei.

In a 73-minute battle, Ayush, who hails from Sanoor near Karkala in Karnataka, showed his grit as he recovered from a game down to outwit his

Indonesian opponent. The Indian made a good start and held leads of 2-0, 7-4 but Farhan kept himself in the hunt and turned the tables after the interval. He took a 14-12 advantage and then reeled off three more points to eke out a 17-14 lead.

The Indonesian had four game points but Ayush managed to save three of them before Farhan prevailed

After the change of sides, Farhan marched ahead to a 8-5 lead but Ayush never stopped fighting. He recovered to 10-8 with five straight points and then held on to roar back into the contest. Things were looking bleak for Ayush in the decider when Farhan grabbed a 13-9 advantage at one stage. But the Indian showed great composure to slowly make his way to 19-19 and 20-20 then nosed ahead.

Nottingham Forest

AP NOTTINGHAM (ENGLAND)

 $D_{\mathrm{goal}}^{\mathrm{ejan}}$ Kulusevski set up a goal and scored another as Tottenham gained ground on the top four by beating Nottingham Forest 2-0 in the English Premier League.

The Sweden midfielder collected goalkeeper Matt Turner's sloppy clearance and fired through the US international's hands from a tight angle in the

65th minute on Friday Earlier, Kulusevski sent a cross for Richarlison to head into the net in first-half stoppage time. Spurs played with 10 men after the 70th when Yves Bissouma was red-carded for a studs-up foul on Ryan Yates.

They have won two in a row after snapping a five-game winless slide on Sunday with a 4-1 win over Newcastle, and were level on points with fourthplaced Manchester City. City led on goal difference ahead of its game against Crystal Palace on



Saturday. Forest manager Steve Cooper will surely face more pressure after picking up just one point in the last six games. Forest has one win in its past 13 matches. It is in 16th place, five points above the relegation zone. The home team briefly thought it equalised through Anthony Elanga from close range just before the hour mark, but he was ruled offside through VAR.

Minutes later, it was 2-0. After Kulusevski's goal, Turner pounded the turf with both hands, lowered his head and covered his face.

Al-Ittihad exits Club World German soccer fans going silent

AP MUNICH

Coccer fan groups across Germany plan to Sfall silent at games this weekend to protest the league's plan to sell a stake in TV and marketing income to an outside investor. Fan clubs and groups known as "ultras" from many of Germany's largest clubs, including Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund, said on Friday they will fall silent for the first 12 minutes of their teams' upcoming games

in a reference to the influence of fans as the proverbial 12th player of a soccer team. We are not prepared to stand idly by as German soccer gets sold out," the groups said in a joint statement.

The protests made their mark on games in the top two divisions on Friday. Fans forced a five-minute stoppage by throwing chocolate coins wrapped in gold foil onto



the field after keeping quiet for the first 12 minutes of Borussia Moenchengladbach's 2-2 draw with Werder Bremen. A second-division game was briefly halted after fans lit flares.

Supporters have been protesting with banners at Bundesliga games for months and fear an investor could pressure the league to change how the competition is run and focus more on TV viewers than the fans in the stadiums.

The fan groups say their "biggest weapon" is the way that the Bundesliga's marketing focuses heavily on Germany's packed stadiums and passionate crowds. Past protests played a key role in the league abolishing unpopular Monday evening kickoffs in what was widely seen as a victory over broadcasters

The protests come after the top two men's soccer divisions voted narrowly to proceed on Monday with negotiations to allow an investment firm to acquire a percentage of future TV and marketing income_in exchange for an up-front payment. The league says the share would be a maximum of 8 per cent over 20 years and that there are "several interested parties."

Cup in Saudi Arabia

AP JEDDAH (SAUDI ARABIA)

∕arim Benzema had a penal-Kty saved in Al-Ittihad's loss at the Club World Cup and the Saudi Arabian champion exited its home tournament before Manchester City and Fluminense even arrived.

Benzema's spot kick to level against Al Åhly in the 45th minute on Friday was hit too straight at goalkeeper Mohamed El-Shenawy, and the champion of Africa from Egypt went on to beat Al-Ittihad 3-1 in their second-round game.

Al Ahly will next play Fluminense, the champion of South America from Brazil, in the semifinals on Monday and Champions League winner Man City will play Urawa Red Diamonds of Japan on Tuesday. Urawa beat León of Mexico, the CONCACAF Champions League titleholder, 1-0 in the earlier game on Friday in Jeddah, the Red Sea port city that has been home to Benzema since joining Al-Ittihad in June after 14 years at Real Madrid.

included a big contingent of fans backing Al Ahly from Cairo, who saw their team take a lead in the 21st when Ali Maaloul scored from a penalty awarded for handball. After Benzema's miss from the spot, Al Ahly added second-half goals from Hussein Elsahat and Emam Ashour. Benzema cut the lead with a goal in stoppage time. Urawa's win was sealed with a 78th-minute goal by Dutch forward Alex Schalk, who squeezed a low, angled shot past advancing León goalkeeper Rodolfo Cota.

A crowd of 56,111 at the King Abdullah Sports City stadium

sports 08

INDIA WOMEN PULVERISE ENGLAND BY 347 RUNS

PTI NAVI MUMBAI

eepti Sharma played the enforcer's role to perfection for the second time in as many days as the dominant India Women scripted a historic 347-run victory over England on the third day of the one-off Test

NEW DELHI | SUNDAY | DECEMBER 17, 2023

here on Saturday India set in motion the hunt for triumph while declaring their second innings closed at the overnight score of 186 for 6, leaving England to climb a huge mountain of 479 runs in their second innings

The Indian bowlers led by offspinner Deepti (4/32) and pacer Pooja Vastrakar (3/23) then bundled out England for 131 to celebrate a victory which now stands as the biggest in terms of runs in the history of women's Test cricket, bettering Sri Lanka's 309-run victory over Pakistan in April 1998.

tle India did not have to wait for long for the first breakthrough this morning.

their ruthless best.



sunday pioneer

It came in the form of Tammy ball in from outside the off to Beaumont (17) with pacer knock down her off-stump. England sunk deeper after suf-Renuka Singh moving the

fering twin blows in Vastrakar's first over. Sophie Dunkley (15) played one straight into the

hands of substitute Harleen Deol at gully. Vastrakar then dealt England a body blow when she cleaned up first-innings star Nat Sciver-Brunt for a first-ball duck, getting the ball to nip back in and passing it through between the bat and the pad.

India also wasted two DRS reviews in haste - one each against Heather Knight and Danni Wyatt - but did not have to work too hard for the third wicket.

An on-song Vastrakar had one nipping away after pitching to find an outside edge off Knight's bat, as Yastika Bhatia did the rest behind the stumps. Knight made a 20-ball 21 with four boundaries.

England's misery continued when Wyatt edged a delivery to the first slip for Deepti's first wicket in the innings after making 12.

Deepti then had Amy Jones (5) pulling one straight to short midwicket, and in her seventh over of the innings, the 26-

Akash: From

Sasaram to Indian

year-old hit the timber twice to dismiss Kate Cross (16) and Lauren Filer (0). While Deepti narrowly missed taking 10 wickets in the game to become the first Indian

Women's player to do so, Rajeshwari Gayakwad (2/20) enjoyed some success. The left-arm spinner had her first success in the form of Sophie Ecclestone (10) when

the batter went for a sweep and missed to connect, while Lauren Bell (8) was caught by Jemimah Rodrigues at silly point for the final wicket of the game.

It was a perfect outing for India also given that all their debutants in the game - Shubha Satheesh, Rodrigues and Renuka - tasted success, but there also was a dampener in the form of Shubha missing the action on the second and the third day owing to a fractured finger.

Shami to miss SA Tests Chahar pulls out as Akash Deep replaces pacer in ODIs

week.



PTI MUMBAI

India will not have the ser-**⊥**vices of Mohammed Shami in their quest to register a maiden Test series win in South Africa as the senior pacer was on Saturday ruled out of the two-match series after the medical team did not clear him, the BCCI announced Shami, who has been recu-

perating from an ankle niggle post his wonder run in the recent ODI World Cup, was earlier included in India's Test squad but his availabiln getting clearance from the board's medical team The BCCI did not name any replacement for Shami. The first Test between India and South Africa will start in Centurion from December Before the opening Test, the Indian Test team members will play a three-day intrasquad match from December

continue his recovery at home and the he could make a return during the Test series at home against England starting from January 25 in Hyderabad. The second Test against the Proteas will start at Cape Town from January 3, 2024 Chahar to miss ODI series

> Pace-bowling all-rounder Deepak Chahar was also withdrawn from the ODI squad after he expressed his unavailability to travel to South Africa because of a family emergency. "Chahar has informed the

BCCI that he will not be available for the upcoming ODI series due to a family medical emergency. "The Men's Selection Committee has named (pacer) Akash Deep as his replacement," the BCCI

statement read. The BCCI also said in the statement that after the conclusion of the first ODI in Johannesburg on Sunday, Shreyas Iyer will join the Test squad to prepare for the

two-match series. "He (Iyer) will not be available for the second and third ODI and will take part in the inter-squad gam PTI 📕 PERTH Dravid & Co to skip ODI series

India eye ODI reboot against South Africa PTI JOHANNESBURG

With a clutch of new-gen stars lining up to make their presence felt, India's jour-ney into their ODI future will hit its first stop during the opening match against South Africa at the hulking Wanderers here on Sunday. Scepticism may be in the air

about the relevance of an ODI series with a T20 World Cup in selfes with a 120 world Cdp in sight, but for India, and to a good extent for the Proteas as well, this face-off signifies the arrival of a fresh line, building up ahead of the ICC

Champions Trophy 2025. Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma have built lofty castles in white

ball formats over the last decade and a half, but now they are in the evening of their careers, and the younger Indian names will perforce need to carry forward their legacy.

None then will be in more focus than KL Rahul, who will lead India in this three-match series. The wicketkeeper-batter has stood-in as India skipper in the past, but a successful outcome here could potentially land the Bengaluru man the ODI captaincy for a longer duration.



While the likes of Rahul, Ruturaj Gaikwad, if he has recovered from the illness that forced him to sit out of the T20Is, and Shreyas Iyer have showcased their prowess in the past, a few others will be eager to become part of the jostle for space in India's white ball

scheme of things. Rinku Singh has impressed everyone with his impact outings in the T20Is so far this year. and the team management will now be eager to see him graduate to the 50-over version, and the left-hander could make his ODI debut on the morrow. The international opportunity

might also come in the way of Rajat Patidar, who has been churning out runs in domestic cricket for a few years now, and Bhardwaj Sai Sudarshan, who had a reasonable run in the Vijay Hazare Trophy for Tamil Nadu, for slots open the middle-order along with Tilak Varma.

The Indian think-tank will hope that these young names could tick a few boxes against a South African attack that has a depleted look to it in the absence of rested Kagiso Rabada and injured Anrich Nortje. India too will not have the three pacers who shored up their bowling in the recent ODI World Cup -- Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

Mohammed Siraj. While Bumrah and Siraj will feature in the Test series, Śhami has been ruled out of the tour after the BCCI medical team did not give him fitness clear

In the absence of these senior pros, the onus is squarely on the shoulders of bowlers such as Avesh Khan, Mukesh Kumar and Arshdeep Singh to marshal India's pace department and they will have to show more consistency despite producing a fine effort in the final T20I against South Africa at this venue.

It is a non-negotiable task for them because Bumrah or other seniors' continued availability cannot be guaranteed going for ward.

The Johannesburg surface showed a rather unexpected leaning towards spin in the third T20I on Thursday, and in that scenario, India will be happy to have three experienced campaigners in their ranks in Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel and Yuzvendra Chahal.



par train ko bhi patri pe laana hota hai, woh aapne kiya. (I lage in Bihar, the 27-year-old was a train but the train need-Akash had his share of struged to be put on track, you did that)," Lahiri, the former gles. He lost his father and elder Bengal off-spinner recollected brother and there was no prethe conversation with his vailing sporting culture in the "ward" just after he received the

family Call it fate but just like Gopalganj's Mukesh, who was playing tennis ball cricket before 'Vision2020' changed his life, Akash, who was a big name' in Asansol's 'khep cricket' (tennis ball tourneys in Bengal), even went a step fur-ther and bowled in a tournament in Dubai.

Marsh declines Test opening role for Australia Shubha has fracture, dislocation to finger

ance.

As of now, Shami is likely to

The BCCI also said head coach Rahul Dravid and other regular support staff will not oversee the threematch ODI series as they will be monitoring the intersquad game in preparation ahead of the Test series, underlining the significance the management is giving to Test series win in the

Rainbow nation

ustralian batter Mitchell AMarsh said he has no desire to open the innings in Test crick-et once David Warner retires after the ongoing series against Pakistan. Marsh, who generally comes up in the order in white ball crick et, asserted that he wanted to

continue to bat at No. 6 in the traditional format. "How do I answer this without

making a headline? For me I ppreciate there's talk about it (him opening) and eventually we're going to need a new open-

er with Davey leaving. "But I've worked really hard to get back in this side and for me to look forward to having a role as an opener just doesn't make sense to me," Marsh was quoted as saying by 'The Age' newspaper.

I love being at number six and in my last four Test matches I've

really found my way and I guess who I am as a Test cricketer and I'm loving it, so I'm reluctant to change that."

Marsh made a counter-attacking 90 off 107 balls to help Australia reach 487 in their first innings along with Warner's 164.

Marsh said batting at No. 6 allowed him to play the way he wants to -- an aggressive brand of cricket -- rather than playing a typically patient and long Test cricket innings

"I think I showed glimpses of the way I played in the last 12 months throughout my career, but probably never really believed in that method.

"I tried to play the long innings and play like Steve Smith and Davey and Uzzy (Usman Khawaja) and all those guys who can bat for six hours," he said. The 32-year-old also thanked his captain Pat Cummins and head coach Andrew McDonald for allowing him to pursue his nat-

ural game. "But I just wanted to come into this Test team and be really true to myself. I'm thankful to Patty (Cummins) and Ronnie (McDonald) for helping me get to this point where I've found my method that works," Marsh said

best news of his career.

With his new ball colleague

Mukesh Kumar already mak-

ing the India cut, Akash would

have been hoping to get a

chance or two to prove his met-

tle like he has been doing it for

Bengal over the past four years.

Hailing from a middle-class

family in remote Sasaram vil-

quarters

"I don't necessarily have the technique of Smudger (Smith) and Marnus (Labuschagne) where they can defend and leave for hours and get through those periods.

Earlier, the Australian pace

trio of Mitchell Starc, captain Pat Cummins and Josh

Hazlewood combined well with

Lyon and broke Pakistan's resis-

tance in the first couple of ses-

sions after Pakistan resumed on

The visitors lost nightwatch-

man Shahzad for seven in the

first over to Cummins (2 for

35) after he survived a close

run-out off the first ball when

Travis Head missed the stumps

Babar and the Imam-ul-Hac

combined to steady Pakistan as

the Pakistan skipper opened his

account with his trademark

at the non-striker's end.

cover-driven boundary.

132 for two.

Harmanpreet Kaur on Saturday, which has made her a doubtful starter for the Test match against Australia to be

Doubtful for

PTI NAVI MUMBA

Australia Test

ndia Women batter Shubha

Satheesh has suffered both

fracture and dislocation to

her finger, informed captain

match against Australia to be played next week. Shubha did not bat in India's second innings on Friday due to a broken finger nor take the field on Saturday in the one-off Test against England, which India won by 347 runs. India will face Australia in another one-off Test at the Wankhede Stadium from December 21 to 24. The BCCI informed before the

The BCCI informed before the start of the play on the third day that Shubha, who played her maiden game for India across formats, will take no further part in the Test.

The Board did not provide any details as to when and how Shubha suffered the injury, though she had warmed up ahead of the second day's play on Friday. But the 24-year-old did not take the field on that day and was seen sitting in the dugout with her fingers

After India completed their world-record 347-run win over England on Saturday, skipper Kaur informed that Shubha had suffered both fracture and dislocation to her finger.

"Our medical team will give you an update on that. She was not able to bat in the second inning She half innings. She had a fracture and suffered (a) dislocation - both together," Kaur told the media during the press conference. Shubha suffered the injury before play began on the second day (Friday) of the Test. 'Yesterday (Day Two) when we were warming up she got injured," Kaur said.

Head coach Muzumdar filled in for my lack of Test captaincy experience: Harmanpreet

PTI NAVI MUMBAI

India women's cricket team captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Saturday credited head coach Amol Muzumdar for taking vital decisions for the team, conceding that she lacked the requisite experience of leading in Tests, after they completed a record 347-run win over England here.

India took precisely seven sessions to create the world record in terms of the largest Test win by runs, while also registering their first-ever victory over England at home and overall their sixth in 39 Tests, here at the DY Patil Stadium.

Harmanpreet, who made her Test debut in 2014, led India for the first time in the format in this game. "Our coach helped us a lot, I had

zero experience in leading the team in Test," Harmanpreet told the media after the massive win.

"I was trusting his (Muzumdar's) decisions - be it sending Shubha (Satheesh) at one-down in the first innings or whatever ideas he gave in bowling, like the first 40 minutes were important today, the idea was to put them (England) in early and utilise the morning conditions," she said. "His experience really helped us and it also gave me time to



decide what was the best for the team," Harmanpreet added. She said India were able to execute all their plans and set the tone with their fielding, which proved decisive for the hosts as

they now prepare to take on Australia in another one-off Test next week. "Everything went according to

the plan. We got the score that we wanted and the bowlers did a good job, both medium pacers and spinners knew their plans and performed accordingshe said.

The biggest positive was our fielding, especially in a long game when you have to field for 90 overs (in a day) it is very important to maintain the energy. We managed to set the tone with our fielding," Harmanpreet added

She said that India relied heavily on their batting experience in the first innings to formulate bowling and fielding plans, which saw England being shot out for 136 and 131 in the two

"We do not have much experi-ence playing Test cricket to determine what sort of field placements can help where. The more you bat, the more you would understand what fields to set for your bowlers," Harmanpreet said.

"The credit (also) goes to the bowlers, whatever fields they were given they bowled according to that. Your job becomes easier when your bowlers can bowl in the right spots," she added. Harmanpreet praised India

debutant Shubha for her 69-run

knock in the first innings while again mentioning Muzumdar's role in it.

"Shubha gave us a very good start - that was also our coach's decision, during the practice game at the NCA, he saw her batting and taking the game ahead," she said.

"He said, 'if we can send her at one-down she can give us a solid start' and she did it the way we were expecting from her, Harmanpreet added.

The India skipper said there would be no change in India's approach in the one-off Test against Australia from December 21-24 at the Wankhede Stadium next week. "The wicket (at Wankhede) is a little different to this one. We have two to three days to train and see how the pitch is and accordingly we can take the decisions. But we will go with the same approach - we will look to win," she said.

Harmanpreet heaped praise on bowling coach Troy Cooley, saying that Indian bowlers have a lot of trust on the former Australia and England men's team coach.

"Whenever we get an opportu-nity to work with him, he motivates us always, especially the bowlers, which areas to bowl and their line and lengths, Harmanpreet said.

Australia stays in **control of 1st Test**

AP PERTH (AUSTRALIA)

ustralia stayed in control of Athe opening Test against Pakistan despite an early stutter in the second innings after it didn't enforce the follow-on

Saturday. Steven Smith and Usman Khawaja carried Australia to a watchful 84 for two in the last session on Day 3 for an over-all lead of 300 after Pakistan collapsed to 271 all out at the stroke of tea and conceded a 216-run lead

Smith was unbeaten on 43 and needed a brief on-field treatment after he was struck on the shoulder by a sharp Shaheen Shah Afridi's ball late in the day with Khawaja not out on 34. Nathan Lyon grabbed three for 66 and was just a wicket away from the elusive landmark of 500 Test wickets as Pakistan's resistance faded in the first couple of sessions. Australia's pacers bowled at a disciplined line and length and Lyon also squeezed the batters on a wicket which gave him some assis-

tance. All-rounder Mitchell Marsh took the prized wicket of Babar Azam in the first session to go along with his spirited knock of 90 in Australia's formidable



first innings score of 487. David Warner, who scored a century in the first innings, and Marnus Labuschagne both fell in an impressive opening spell of debutant fast bowler Khurram Shahzad as Australia slumped to five for two early in the last session.

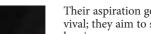
Warner went without scoring as he holed out at mid-wicket off Shahzad's short-pitched ball while Labuschagne also got a top edge against the pacer before Smith and Khawaja played out Pakistan pacers cautiously and put the home team in the driver's seat in the opening test of the three-match series.





National heroes just 15 days ago, rat-hole miners now face the struggle for livelihood as their days of glory wane, writes ASAD

very story, no matter how remarkable, eventually The pursuit of a fresh livelihood has become their main concern.



Their aspiration goes beyond just survival; they aim to step out of the chal-

fades from people's minds, and the same goes for the 12 rat-hole miners who played the last crucial role in rescuing 41 workers trapped in the Uttarkashi tunnel 20 days ago. In a last-ditch effort to free the workers trapped underground since November 12, the rat-hole miners dug more than 10 metres in just 48 hours at the Silkyara tunnel in Uttarkashi. This finally resolved the tense situation on November 28, with the media closely watching the rescue operation. Before this success, six different plans were attempted, including drilling from three locations in different ways, but none of them worked. Even when the rescuers were feeling unsure, hesitant to give a definite timeline for finishing the colossal task, international tunnelling professional Arnold Dix said, "It may take some time, perhaps up to a month, but I cannot specify the exact timeline. Rushing the process is not advisable. The priority is the safe return of these men, and I am confident they will be home for Christmas."

In this setting, where even the rescue experts were losing hope, the rat-hole miners swooped in and lifted everyone's spirits.

On November 28, a burst of euphoria swept through as the news flashed: The beleaguered workers, ensnared in the tunnel, were freed. It marked the culmination of a 17-day-long marathon rescue operation — a testament to the unwavering determination and collaborative effort of five agencies involved, including NDRF, SDRF, Indian Army, micro-tunnelling expert Chris Cooper and other State and Central agencies.

The heroic efforts of the rat-hole miners garnered not only praise but also captured the spotlight of the media, propelling them into the esteemed status of national and international heroes. Their courageous actions resonated far and wide, casting them as symbols of inspiration and resilience on a global scale.

Now, as those days of glory have passed, hailing from impoverished backgrounds, these people have begun to toil relentlessly, dedicating exhaustive hours to cleanse the sewer lines of Delhi. Sitting in a cozy little one room duplex in Khajoori Khas colony of Delhi, one miner Md Irshad Ansari who helped in the rescue said the claps and cheers they got did not last long.

"Right now, we are putting in a lot of effort to earn a living, doing the same job of cleaning sewers. We had hoped that the significant event would lift us out of poverty," he shared. Another team member, Monu Kumar, residing in Uttar Pradesh, said people are showing love, and they have received some cheques, but they are not sufficient. He said after some time, the money will run out, and they will be back to their usual struggles. "We want the Government to provide us with some jobs to make life easier," he said.

After their brave deed, about fifteen days later, the visits to their homes in Delhi have slowed down. Initially, there was a long line of well-wishers in the winding streets eager to congratulate them, but now, things have settled a bit.

In the curvy lanes of the less fortunate neighbourhood, where life's essentials are hard to come by, people continue to recognise and appreciate their courageous acts.

Their bravery has made a lasting mark in the community, keeping their neighbourhood well-known and respected. For days, they became the talk of the town in their close-knit community. Everybody eagerly approached, wanting to shake hands and exchange a few words with them. "They are good boys. Around 10 years ago, they were part of the team which had installed a sewer line in the colony, and we all still remember that. Now, they have done a remarkable job by saving the lives of the trapped miners. We are proud of them," said Israel, a resident who lives just a few lanes away from the house of 36-year-old Wakeel Hassan, the leader of the rathole miners' group.

Rat-hole miners are skilled at getting coal from small, flat mines. They dig a narrow hole, about three to four feet wide, just big enough for one person to go down and collect coal. To make the hole, they use tools like pickaxes, shovels, and hammers. In 2014, the Meghalaya Government



put a stop to rat-hole mining. This decision followed a temporary ban from the National Green Tribunal (NGT) after a sad event in 2012. During that incident, 30 coal workers got stuck in a mine, and unfortunately, 15 lives were lost.

Following the Uttarkashi tunnel rescue, the story took a turn as the rathole miners received praise, even from online users. A user on X enthusiastically posted, "Indian Jugad 'Rat-Hole-Mining' triumphs over Giant Augur machine!" This acclaim signifies the miners' resourcefulness and resilience in overcoming challenges, capturing the attention and praise of online communities.

Away from the attention of the virtual world, the six rat-hole miners, gathered in a small room filled with people, are hopeful that media coverage would bring a positive turn to their luck, but now seem a bit sombre. Not much has drastically changed in their lives despite the initial burst of attention and joy.

Many of them, migrants from Uttar Pradesh, journeyed to Delhi years ago with dreams of making it big and becoming wealthy. Unfortunately, fate had a different plan for them. Without formal education, they found themselves doing sewer work, hoping that one day they could afford to own their own house. They settled in an unauthorised colony in Delhi's Khajoori Khas in 1992 or some later on, because that is what they could afford at the time.

In the midst of his small home in Khajoori Khas, crowded with visitors and his family members all around, Wakeel stands out as the most polished among the rat-hole miners. Clad in a spotless white shirt and black trousers, clean-shaven, he takes the lead in interacting with the media, eloquently expressing the viewpoints of his fellow team members. As he chatted with the YouTubers and guests filling his home, his phone suddenly buzzed. Quickly grabbing it, a bright smile lit up his face as if he had stumbled upon a treasure. It was Akhilesh Yadav on the other end. Later, he shared that Akhilesh wanted to meet them to honour their efforts with a cash reward. The other five miners at the house, who had gathered to talk with the media, were overjoyed. But that was not sufficient; it was like a tiny drop in the vast ocean. The miners are yearning for more - a last ing solution to their poverty. They realise that if this golden opportunity slips away, they might remain in a state of destitution.

lenging sewer work and embrace something more dignified. Like many middle-class Indians, they share the dream of providing their children with quality education, nutritious meals, and a comfortable home. The desire is vividly etched on their faces.

"We have not received much. It feels like we have already been forgotten. We hope the Government pays attention to our situation and provides us with jobs so that our lives can stabilise," said Wakeel.

Another rat-hole miner, Munna Qureshi, said for the last 14 days, they have had no permanent job.

"Whatever money we got from wellwishers is now running out as we do not have a job right now. Our request is from the Governments to think about us also," he said.

The first political bigwig to visit their home was the Delhi Congress president along with his team. They handed ₹5,000 to each of the six workers residing in Delhi. Soon after, the BJP team also paid a visit and gave them a more substantial amount of ₹25,000 each. Then, out of the blue, Wakeel said one day he received a call from Akhilesh Yadav, the former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and chairman of the Samajwadi Party, who offered them with ₹1 lakh each as token money for their courageous work.

"We appreciate the recognition we have received, but what has come so far is like peanuts. As time goes by, it will be used up, and we will go back to our original work, living a life of hardship. We were invited by Indian Idol, and they gave us a ₹1 lakh cheque each, but we were told it would take months to cash it. The reality has hit all 12 of us that there is nobody recognising our work until now," said Wakeel.

The struggling rat-hole miners believe that despite their hard work and media attention so far, they have not become true heroes with improved opportunities. That is why they are seizing every chance to get their stories covered in the media, help in building their narrative, and a viral report might change their lives forever, said one YouTuber who visited their house a few days ago for a story.

THE STRUGGLING **RAT-HOLE MINERS BELIEVE THAT DESPITE** THEIR HARD WORK AND MEDIA ATTENTION SO FAR, THEY HAVE NOT BECOME TRUE HEROES WITH IMPROVED **OPPORTUNITIES. THAT** IS WHY THEY ARE SEIZING EVERY CHANCE TO GET THEIR STORIES COVERED IN THE MEDIA, HELP IN BUILDING THEIR NARRATIVE, AND A VIRAL REPORT MIGHT CHANGE THEIR LIVES FOREVER



EVERYBODY NEEDS BEAUTY AS WELL AS BREAD, PLACES TO PLAY IN AND PRAY IN, WHERE NATURE MAY HEAL AND GIVE STRENGTH TO BODY AND SOUL — JOHN MUIR

health/books 10 New Delhi, December 17, 2023

BEAT THE WINTER BLUES Certainly, maintaining good health during the winter is crucial, as colder temperatures can bring about specific health challenges.

Here's some advice from doctors to THE HEALTH PIONEER on common winter health issues and how to address them

EYE CARE

r Mahipal S Sachdeva, Ophthalmologist and Chairman of Centre for Sight, a chain of Eye Hospitals reminds us that tending to your eyes during the chilly winter season requires a blend of care and humidity to prevent your eyes feeling like they are on a polar expedition!



DR MAHIPAL S SACHDEVA

First and foremost, hydration is key. Drink water throughout the day to retain the natural moisture of your eyes. Consider an indoor humidifier or lubricating eye drops to counter the dry spells cast by the aggressive heating systems and air purifiers. For those planning to bingewatch during winter breaks, we advocate to practice the 20-20-20 rule i.e. every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. Also, blink frequently and remember to keep the screen at an arm distance with room adequately illuminated.

Lastly, this winter season, enjoy a hearty banquet of omega-3 and vitamins A, C, and E by incorporating fresh fruits, nuts, berries, and leafy greens in your diet. Although the winter season makes you feel lethargic, one should go for a walk to soak up vitamin D from the morning sun. Children should especially be encouraged to play outside to reduce the myopic stimulus received from the digital devices indoors. When planning to step out of the house, use UV-pro-tected sunglasses for that harsh winter sun.

OVERALL WELLBEING

Dr Pramila Baitha, Additional Director, Internal Medicine Fortis Hospital, Greater Noida shares that winter blues can cast a shadow on our well-being and as a Physician, she offers practical advice to navigate through this seasonal challenge. Firstly,



therapy. Maintain a balanced diet rich in mood-boosting nutrients, emphasizing fruits, vegetables, and omega-3 fatty acids. Regular exercise is crucial; even a short daily walk can enhance mood and energy levels.

Ensure adequate sleep hygiene, maintaining a consistent sleep schedule. Stay socially connected; isolation exacerbates winter blues, so engage in activities with loved ones. If symptoms persist, consult a healthcare professional to rule out conditions like Seasonal Affective Disorder. By adopting these habits, one can effec-



DIABETES

Dr Sharwari Dabhade Dua, Consultant Internal medicine and endocrinology. Fortis La-Femme, Delhi discusses how winter can be extremely stressful for patients with diabetes as feeling cold releases hormones like cortisol and adrenalin which can lead to fluctuations in sugar level.



DR SHARWARI DABHADE DUA

world in frosty temperatures, expectant mothers may find themselves facing distinct con-siderations and potential risks When blood sugar starts to increase, it can lead to inflamsuch as respiratory infections, including the flu and common mation in nerves of feet and legs causing extreme pain and numbness. Most patients expecold. Pregnant women may be more susceptible to these illnessrience decreased sensation in es due to changes in their legs causing injuries or diabetic foot ulcers. immune system. It's crucial to Due to lack of adequate sunlight, maintain good hygiene prac-



Pregnant women should consider vitamin D supplements, especially if their exposure to sun-

light is minimal. Cold weather can be deceiving, Gynecology, the Aura Speciality and pregnant women may not feel as thirsty as they do in warmer months. Moreover, indoor heating systems and dry winter air can lead to dehydration. Staying well-hydrated is essential for the health of both the mother and the baby. Pregnant women should explore indoor exercise options, such as prenatal yoga or swimming, to

stay active and relieve stress. To combat the cold, pregnant women should dress in layers to temperature.

tial for staying warm during outdoor activities.

Combat the drying effects of indoor heating by drinking plenty of water throughout the day. One can opt herbal teas and warm soups too.

Ensure a robust immune system by consuming a well-balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Additionally, discuss the flu vaccine with your healthcare provider to protect

against seasonal influenza. Since sunlight exposure may be limited during the winter, consider vitamin D supplements to meet the recommended daily intake after consulting with a healthcare professional.

Also, maintain good indoor air quality by regularly ventilating living spaces as it helps reduce the risk of respiratory infections. Pregnant women can engage in safe indoor exercises like prenatal yoga or swimming after consulting with a healthcare provider.

Use a gentle moisturizer to keep the skin hydrated, and don't forget to apply sunscreen spending time

SKIN CARE

Dr. Diksha Agrawal, Consultant Dermatologist, Ghaziabad Dermatology Dr RP Prashar, Chief Medical Officer (Ayurveda) MCD informs that winter has been described in Ayurveda as the Centre, says that winter weather can be harsh on the best season for health. The skin due to cold tempera-tures, low humidity, and indoor heating; leading to main reason is that the 'Jathragni' (the fire element present in the gastro-intestinal tract) responsible for combusdryness, itching, and irritation and digestion of food, is at tion. She shares some comits peak level of the year. mon issues and ways to handle them during winter:



AYURVEDA

DR RP PRASHAR

In other words, the body metabolism is at its best during these cold days which helps conversion of all the ingested food into energy. All the heavy foods rich in protein, carbohydrate and fat can be digested very easily due to the peak level of jathragni. Regular physical exercise has been advised in Ayurveda dur ing the winter season so that all the consumed nutritious food is changed into lean mass rather than fat. Even sternous exercise can be performed on daily basis in this season as it is not exhaustive as it is in the summer season. It is advisable to massage the body daily before exercising as

it tones up the muscles. Sesame oil is the best for massage, however mustard oil can also be used Millets like corn, bajra, jowar are highly rich in minerals and can be easily digested in this season. Rice, legumes, peanuts, etc. should be used after cooking in Desi ghee, preferably cow ghee. Green vegetables like spinach, sarson, bathua, cabbage, methi, chana, etc. provide high nutrition in the form of vitamins and minerals. Vegetables like carrots,

sweet potato also provide high nutrition along with fibre. Foods which are considered cold in nature like curd, butter milk, kadhi, ice cream, kulfi must be avoided to avert cough and cold, which are common problems of the season. Tulsi, Ginger, black peeper, Clove,

If any issues persist or worsen,



• Dry skin: Moisturize regularly using thicker creams. Consider using a humidifier indoors to moisten air and prevent skin from drying out. Chapped lips: harsh winds, dehydration and constant liplicking behavior can worsen dryness and lead to skin inflammation. Apply a hydrating lip

balm with SPF 15+ frequently,

avoid licking your lips and cover

the area with a scarf when out-

doors

Eczema: Also known as dermatitis, it worsens in winters. Use fragrance-free, gentle cleansers and moisturizers. Apply moisturizer immediately after bathing to lock in moisture. Avoid hot showers and opt for lukewarm water to prevent further irritation.

Cracked heels and hands: Keep hands and feet moisturized with thick creams or petroleum jelly. Exfoliate gently and apply moisturizer before bed, wearing gloves or socks overnight to lock in moisture.

• Flare-up of psoriasis: This skin condition is known to increase in winters. Patients are advised to avoid hot showers, encouraged to moisturize well and see a dermatologist if the condition worsens.

Healthy diet rich in essential fatty acids and vitamins should be consumed to support overall skin health.

sun is shining, or consider light and physical well-being.

tively manage with light—step outdoors when the and promote overall mental els which in turn weaken bones and lead to fatigue.

such as trequ washing, to reduce the risk of infections

consulting doctor regularly is

Dr Ritu Sethi, Director-

Clinic, Gurgaon expresses con-cern that as winter blankets the

much advised.

PREGNANCY

warm coat, and a hat are essen- during winter.

Thermal undergarments, a UV rays can still be harmful

thi, etc. n ust be boiled ir milk or tea to keep your body warm and immunity high.

ice from gist for personalized care and treatment.

BOOK REVIEW

Our Constitution is a treasure trove for all Indians

The most important part of Parliament is the Opposition whose job is to oppose. If there is no Opposition, there is no democracy, says Fali S Nariman in his lucidly written gripping book

By Kumar Chellappan

What gives life to a country is its Constitution, its rule book. It is the Constitution which determines the personality of the State and the complex nature between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, the three pillars that sustain its civilization.

Indians obey in letter and spirit the Constitution of India, which is the culmination of the works launched by the British colonial masters beginning with the passage of Government of India Act 1858 that marked the end of the reign by the British East India Company and taking over of the administration of the country by His Majesty's Government and lowering of the Union Jack in the mid night of August 14-15, 1947 with which power was transferred to Îndians.

The Constituent Assembly, a body of scholars, topnotch bureaucrats (representing the elite Civil Service, not the present one but the vintage ICS) legal luminaries, politicians and economists constituted the Constituent Assembly which began its brainstorming session on 9 December 1946 that went up to 26 November 1949 that resulted in India becoming richer with a Constitution described as one of lengthiest written works of its kind in the world. The Constitution of India should be described as one of the wonders of the world as it inte-

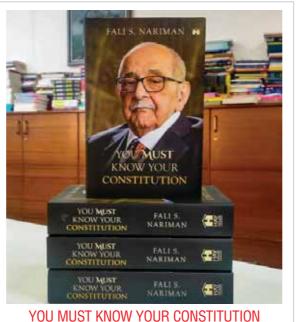
grates and unifies a "sub-conti-nent" home to hundreds of who should have sounded the nent" home to hundreds of castes, creeds, religions, languages, traditions and customs. Fali S Nariman, the Bheeshma Pitamah of India's legal world, has come out with a book "You Must Know Your Constitution" a comprehensive volume on the Constitution of India. The 94-year old author says that Indian Constitution has 395 Articles, 251 printed pages and a word tome of 1,46, 385 words. The quality of some of the lawyers appearing in High Courts and Supreme Court, underscores the need for them to read Indian constitution thoroughly. Nariman untangles the complex

nature of the Constitution through eight thought provoking chapters. At a time when there is a strong demand from a section of society for a One Nation One Poll electoral system and dumping the archaic socialist system of economy, it is an ideal time to read this work, which I am sure would not be

alarm bell when the rule book came under attack by those who presided over the legislature. This is a major drawback and Nariman is trying to address the lacuna through his work. I have not read his autobiography (Before Memory Fades) and I do feel it is a major failure/shortcoming. (Books have become expensive though I do feel that Nariman has every justification to charge a reasonable price for his treasure house of knowledge). The other book by the same author I read was Harmony Amidst Disharmony, the first volume of the series on Arbitration. Since it is too professional and academic in nature

(though Nariman has made it in a lucid style), the subject may not be comprehensible for average readers.

You Must Know Your Constitution" features the history of the evolution of Indian Constitution over the last six decades. It was Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak who proposed the nonagenarian's swan song. The nation needs scholars like in 1895 a parliamentary system of government for India. Tilak, Nariman for the survival of its whose war cry was "Swaraj is my Birth Right" spoke about "Constitution of India Act" and democratic syThe Indian Constitution's DNA is made up of the values and philosophy as mentioned in Ramayana, provided for a Parliament of Mahabharat and of course India. His vision was that of "an Bhagawath Gita. Though there Indian nation wherein every citwere instances of adulteration of izen may express his thoughts by the Constitution, by and large words or writings and publish them in print without liability or it could be claimed that the rule book has remained intact. censure except being answerable What ails the Indian for abuses that may be commit-Constitution is the silence mainted in the exercise of this right



Fali S Nariman | Hay House | ₹899/-

and wherein no-one shall be sentenced except by a competent authority". He also dreamt of a nation wherein the law should be equal to all. This remained in the realm of wishful expectation, according to the author.

The second attempt after Tilak's dream project was the Government of India Act 1919 which B R Ambedkar described as Constitution of British India as it was passed by the British Parliament. The effort by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to get a Constitution for India too failed as the Labor Party Government

which got the Bill drafted by the former lost the majority in House of Commons and Indian hopes suffered a temporary setback.

> Before the enactment of Government of India Act 1947, sometime in 1946, Father of the Nation Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi had suggested that the Constitution of India should reflect the will of the people instead of professional politicians and legal luminaries who have no first-hand experience with the culture, tradition and heritage of this vast country.

Nariman points out that the book The Gandhian Constitution for Free India authored by Shriman Narayan for which the foreword was written by Gandhi has highlight-ed this demand. Whether the members of the Constituent Assembly bother to go through this work is anybody's guess. The constituent assembly met from 9 December 1946 to 26 November 1949 to finalize the Constitution. The legendary Nani Palkhivala, has said in one of his articles that the foundations of the Constitution have been shaken by the folly of the people, the corruption of our politicians and the negligence of the elite. "In just 30 years (1950-1980), we have reduced the noble processes of our Constitution to the level of a carnival of claptrap, cowardice and chicanery" wrote Palkhivala. He had enough reasons to write like this.

Nariman says in his book that a democratic government demands not only a parliamentary majority but also parliamentary minority. Quoting Ivor Jennings (British jurist who was an authority on Constitutions) the author says that the most important part of Parliament is the Opposition. Attacks upon the Government and upon individual ministers are the functions of the Opposition The duty of the Opposition is to oppose. If there is no Opposition, there is no democracy," writes Nariman.

There are some noteworthy

incidents about which the author is silent. What was happening inside the Houses during 2014 to 2023? For the first time in the history of Indian parliament, we saw militant Opposition staging demonstrations inside the House holding placards and posters. Though the Government of the day had set apart three or four days for discussion on Farm Reforms Bill, the entire discussion was a total washout. The new generation may be

ignorant of the Keshavananda Bharati vs State of Kerala case (1973) in which the Constitution bench ruled that amendment of the Constitution means that the original spirit of the Constitution must remain intact after the amendment. The basic structure or features of the Constitution cannot be changed. But the then Government derailed the 1973 verdict by

altering and tampering the Preamble of the Constitution. The characterization of India as sovereign democratic republic has been changed to "sovereign socialist secular democratic republic". But why? Till date no satisfactory explanation has been given to this question. During the Citizenship Amendment Act, we saw all topnotch Opposition leaders staging demonstrations across the country by reading the tampered preamble of the Constitution.

Dr Subramanian Swamy, senior BJP leader and former minister for law and justice quotes Dr Ambedkar who questioned the

propriety of introducing the terms secularism and socialism in the preamble. "The term secularism is inherent in Indian ethos. The word socialism is too political and the incorporation of this term makes it mandatory for those who do not believe in this ideology to leave the country. This is unacceptable," Ambedkar reportedly told the Constituent Assembly and it was decided to dump the terms from the draft.

Swamy who was the lone Opposition member to witness the 42nd amendment says that he was aghast watching the proceedings. "The amendment was passed by jailing the entire Opposition law makers under Defence of India Rule and maintenance of Internal security act (MISA). It was an illegal act," said Dr Swamy.

Any discussion on the Indian Constitution would not be complete without mentioning Nandlal Bose, the Santiniketan professor who embellished the manuscript of the Constitution with his paintings our of the great Indian epics. The Government of India should bring out future editions of the Constitution with the paintings by Bose. Nariman could have enlightened

the readers with these instances which would have made them richer in knowledge. But all said, this is a must read work for those who want to keep abreast of the functioning of our Constitution.Yes, We must know our Constitution.





A message of transition in JNU

Contrary to negative a melting pot of Indian culture celebrates its patriotism through a 'Wall of Heroes' dedicated to Param Vir Chakra awardees

BRAJESH KUMAR TIWARI

Tawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) recently updated its logo and incorporated the tagline "Tamso Ma Jyotirgamaya." Until now, the logo did not feature a motto. The fundamental interpretation of "Tamso Ma Jyotirgamaya" is the transition from a state of darkness to a state of illumination. Undoubtedly, a logo is a crucial instrument that defines the theme of an organisation. When approached correctly, the essence of the logo plays a significant part in shaping the business' image and serves as a powerful means of conveying messages.

JNU has consistently maintained its position as one of the most esteemed universities in the nation. Since its establishment in 1969, JNU has continually strived for excellence, innovation, and intellect, earning a distinct reputation. It holds a unique and significant position in the realm of intellectual concepts. The university has consistently voiced its opinions on both domestic and global matters. However, certain individuals and even a majority of the media have persistently engaged in a biased campaign against the university, resulting in the fragmentation of its reputation into several factions.

The university has integrated concepts from Nalanda, Moscow, and Paris Universities, as well as the London School of Economics. JNU has facilitated access to high-quality education for students from families with limited resources, earning it the reputation of being widely regarded as the most affordable university in the nation.

In addition to the standard reservation policy, JNU is the sole educational institution that grants extra preference to women and students hailing from economically deprived and underdeveloped regions. Every aspiring student in the nation dreams of gaining admission to this university, believing that it will pave the way for unobstructed success in life. The current Vice Chancellor, Professor Shantishree Pandit, is a JNU alumna, and her understanding of the university's working style, excellence, and creativity is profound. Recently, the School of Indian Languages has been initiated to promote the Indian knowledge tradition

In response to changing times, new schools such as Social Sciences, Modern Sciences, Ayurveda and Traditional Music, along with Modern Medicine, School of Management, and School of Engineering have been established in JNU. On one hand, there are hard-core UPSC aspirants, and on the other hand, there are research-oriented scholars. The credit for producing Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers, Nobel Laureates, and renowned bureaucrats goes to JNU, despite being criticised by some for allegedly harbouring anti-national sentiments. This institute, boasting more than eight thousand students and about 550 teachers, consistently ranks at the top in all of India's university rankings. In the National Institutional Ranking Framework by the Ministry of Education, JNU has consistently held the first position among all Central universities. Moreover, JNU has earned recognition as one of the premier universities globally.

The critical mindset here serves as an indicator of high intelligence. Grading is conducted throughout the semester, and the collaborative process of knowledge creation in the classroom is actively promoted. JNU openly discusses the relationship between academia and the outside world. In fact, JNU fosters the ability to question, debate, and embrace disagreement, which is why the university is renowned for lively discussions outside the classrooms. This vibrant atmosphere is consistently observed in cafeterias and dhabas. The JNU Library, one of the largest national libraries in the country, along with Parthasarathy Rocks (a small mound in the campus forest) and Ganga Dhaba, remain central to intellectual discussions. The insistence on delving into the heart of matters is a unique aspect of JNU. Despite a few instances of abuse on the walls and the existence of a "TukdeTukde gang", it is unjust to label this esteemed university as anti-national. The actions of a small minority should not overshadow the fact that the majority of JNU students are bringing pride to the country through their achievements. Universities and students play a crucial role in nation-building. Every year, numerous JNU students join prestigious institutions such as Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy, Hyderabad Police Academy, and Foreign Services. JNU is proudly showcasing its success both within the country and abroad. In recent years, in addition to achieving top rankings in the Indian Economic Services, almost 70 per cent of the selected candidates were from INU Today, JNU alumni occupy high-ranking positions in policy institutions and media. Many universities have JNU alumni serving as vice-chancellors, and key educational institutions boast presidents and directors with ties to JNU. Heads of States from various countries, Union ministers, individuals spanning the bureaucracy to the film industry-JNU alumni are making noteworthy contributions across diverse fields. Even after five decades since its establishment, Jawaharlal Nehru University continues to command a prominent position in the list of developed countries worldwide, making it impossible to ignore. It is unfortunate that the excellent educational tradition of JNU has rarely become a topic of general discussion. Instead, preference has often been given to a handful of slogans on media and social platforms. When the walls of JNU are scrutinised, it is seldom mentioned that this very university houses a "Wall of Heroes" dedicated to the Army. Here, photographs of 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees are prominently displayed. Beyond the sitins and protests, there is a broader perspective of the university that encompasses patriotism, the passion to make a differ-ence, and the courage to lead. JNU reflects all the colours of Indian culture. Students from both large and small States have been studying here. The names of buildings, hostels, roads, and facilities on the campus are drawn from Indian heritage. JNU stands as a representation of excellence with equality, innovation with inclusion, and integrity. Unfortunately, some individuals have used JNU for their own agenda and narrative. It is important to note that JNU does not belong to any specific political spectrum but adheres to an ideological creation tradition where everyone is granted equality; this, in fact, is the strength of JNU. It presents the best cultural and geographical picture of India.

WAR OF ETHICS: Unravelling complexities in Gaza conflict

The eruption of war between Hamas and Israel, which has claimed thousands of lives and caused massive destruction, raises several insoluble questions to ponder. Following what has been called a terror attack by Hamas in Israel on October 7, the retaliation by the group has resulted in more than 10,000 casualties and unprecedented destruction in the Gaza Strip. The two extremes, with Israel declaring itself "at war" and Hamas cheering the motionless hostages paraded in Gaza, make the chances of a possible ceasefire weak. At a time when international communities are divided on taking sides, the (un)ethical questions surrounding the ongoing war between Hamas and Israel merit discussion.

Should Hamas' attack on Israel be justified? Should Hamas' attack be ignored since Israel's counterattack exceeds the death and destruction? Should Israel be blamed absolutely for its ruthless retaliation?

These questions can possibly be addressed by appealing to standard eth-ical principles of regular and irregular warfare. Accordingly, the (un)ethical dimensions of the ongoing Israel-Hamas war can be interrogated through both "traditional just war theory" and "contemporary irregular warfare tenet". The rationale for engaging through the above-mentioned theoretical positions can be predicated upon the status of the warring parties: Israel as a nation-state (as seen through the dominant perspective) and Hamas as a non-state actor (although Hamas participates in

Despite their contrarian fundamentals, the striking similarity between the above-mentioned theoretical positions is that they come to a consensus on the necessity of a "just cause" (Jus ad Bellum) to initiate a war; nonetheless, they vary in characterising the "just

According to traditional war theory, the "just cause" includes a cluster of aspects such as: a reason that inhibits unjust injury; the right intention that should be delimited to attain the goal of inhibiting unjust injury; likelihood of success, where the possibility of success must be greater than the failure; proportionality, which refers to morally expected advantages overshadowing the morally estimated evil from the war; and the war as the last resort left to achieve the end.

On the contrary, the contemporary asymmetric warfare notion defines "just because" as "that it may permissibly be pursued by means of war, and that the reason why this is so is at least in part that those against whom the war is fought have made themselves morally liable to military attack". The moral liability to be harmed is acquired through satisfying the purpose, i.e., if that harm is in use to prevent further misconduct or compensation for the victims of previous wrongdoing. The liability to be harmed is not present in the lack of such a goal. Thus, it can be fortified that the liabil-

ity of people to be harmed in a war is based on thwarting the attainment of an unfair cause and protecting people from injuries by unjust combatants in their endeavour to attain an unfair cause. Accordingly, the liability of a person to harm is qualified by the same objective, and thus, the attribution of liability to harm is regulated by the prerequisite of "necessity". The internal relation between necessity and liability confirms that "if harming a person is unnecessary for the achievement of a relevant type of goal, that person cannot be liable to be harmed.

Thus, the moral liability to harm relies on the moral liability to be harmed if it prevents the person from achieving an unjust goal.

It is also plausible to invoke the moral principles that are to be followed during the war (Jus in Bello). It includes a set of principles such as differentiation, which demands segregation between combatants and non-combatants; proportionality, which must be upheld between unintentional military harm and military benefits attained; and military necessity, which expects the lowest amount of death and destruction to be aimed for using the least detrimental military means. Given these moral prescriptions, the attack by Hamas on Israel demands moral accountability. A fundamental question that can be raised is whether Hamas' attack precedes a just cause. The liability of Hamas to kill thousands and take hostages of hundreds can be verified by the objective that involves preventing the attainment of unjust goals, such as deterring future misconduct or compensating the victims for former

Palestinians search for bodies and survivors in the rubble of a residential building destroyed in an Israeli airstrike in Rafah southern Gaza Strip on Friday PTI

delinquency. However, Hamas outrightly fails to qualify this condition since those civilians are neither aimed at future misconduct nor are they culprits of some other victims for whom the former is supposed to pay compensation. They are innocent civilians and noncombatants and thus seek immunity to be protected from any attack. Hence, Hamas lacks the moral liability to harm Israelis and thus is unethical.

However, according to UN Article 51 (grounded in Just War theory), a war can be initiated on the account of immediate self-defence. Accordingly, the counterattack by Israel may qualify the necessary condition to have a just cause to retaliate against Hamas. Because it is also compensation for the victims who have been harmed by Hamas and can be a deterrent to prevent future delinquency. Thus, Israel might secure its moral stance to this extent. Nonetheless, there are certain prescribed humanitarian rules (Jus in Bello) that should have been followed by Israel in waging a war on Hamas. It is evident that Israel ignores following those rules in terms of undiscriminating combatant liability and noncom-

batant immunity; disproportionality between aimed military benefits and unintentional military harm; and military non-necessity that causes intensive death and destruction, including displacements, by using the most harmful military means. The war is unethically of Israel as is reflected in blocking the supply of food, water, and other essentials for the civilians in Gaza. Accordingly, it can be safely argued that

both sides violate International Humanitarian laws in terms of not protecting civilians through humane treatment and thus commit war crimes. Killing civilians and non-combatants through unanticipated attacks, taking them hostages, and using them as human shields are the war crimes committed by Hamas, which is unethical. However, although Israel satisfies the necessary condition (Jus ad Bellum) to initiate the war, it fails to qualify Jus in Bello and thus lapses into immorality. Apart from anthropomorphic issues,

Both sides stand accused of violating international humanitarian laws, committing war crimes against civilians. Hamas' use of human shields and attacks on non-combatants raise ethical concerns. Meanwhile. Israel's failure to follow rules on combatant liability, proportionality, and military necessity reflects immorality



NIBEDITA JENA

legislative processes in Palestine). cause?

(The writer is Associate Professor, Atal Bihari Vajpayee School of Management and Entrepreneurship, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. The views expressed are personal)

there is a necessity to ponder upon environmental pollution caused by war because nature is already alarmed to reflect upon it and its dire consequences. Thus, any war, whether regular or asymmetric, precedes a meditative rumination about the awful consequences of it.

(The writer is a former Ethical Consultant at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru.)

PERSPECTIVE NURTURING INDIA'S FUTURE

The importance of collective action for ensuring a brighter future for children is crucial for the country's growth, write Sanskriti Chandel, Arfa Monis, and Muddassir Rashid

hildren are the future of a →country, and it is important that they grow up in an environment where nobody treats them unfairly. To achieve this goal we need to eradicate discrimination in all its forms, paving the way for a society where every child can get equal chance, fulfilling the dream of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Narendra Modi.

'The children of today will make the India of tomorrow. The way we bring them up will determine the future of the country," said Nehru.

The dissemination of skills through high-quality education, championing their individual interests, and aiding them in unlocking their vast potential is crucial

It is important to see that they are not forced into the relentless and cut-throat arena of competition, threatening to snatch away the essence of their innocent childhood. While interacting with students during the fifth edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha at Delhi's Talkatora Stadium, Modi said, "The unfulfilled dreams of parents and teachers should not be forced upon children. They should be allowed to decide their future freely and follow their dreams."

However, the journey toward providing equal opportunities has been marked by its share of challenges, some seemingly insurmountable. The cause of concern for years has been that a lot of children, especially girls, are leaving school early, child labour, early marriage and sexual exploitation.

In 2021-22, more students left school before finishing secondary education in seven States compared to the average for the whole country.

Gujarat, Bihar, Karnataka, Assam, and Punjab are some of the States where the number of students dropping out of secondary school was higher than the national average of 12.6 per cent, according to official data sources.



Last year, a survey by the United Nations Children's

ing for others.

High dropout rates pose a major challenge to achieving the ambitious 100 per cent Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) goal outlined in the new National Education Policy by 2030. Officials stress the importance of addressing this issue to successfully implement the policy's objectives.

to issues such as child labour and trafficking. Within the context of contemporary South Asia the culture of childhood is deeply intertwined with a rich history and traditions," said Jamia Hamdard Vice Chancellor Professor M Afshar Alam this week at an international seminar which drew experts from Bangladesh and Nepal also to the university campus.

There is a strong realisation among experts to safeguard India's future. Convener and chairperson of the Department of Sociology at South Asian University, Dev Nath Pathak, emphasised the importance of collaborative efforts in promoting child rights and social development.

The importance of collective Fund (UNICEF) revealed that in some areas, children had to action for ensuring a brighter leave school and begin workfuture for children is crucial for ing as labourers alongside their the country's growth, as India families or doing house cleanis home to more than 444 million children, making it "Children in South Asia face one of the places with the deprivation of basic rights due most children and teenagers in

the world. Protecting children is a collective responsibility involving States, communities, civil society, and various organisations, explained Farhat Basir Khan, Media Studies Professor at Jamia Hamdard.

It is crucial to tackle the issues children face every day, emphasised Jamia Hamdard Professor Reshma Nasreen.

There is a need for collective action for the welfare of children. Taking care of children goes beyond just their bodies it is important to look after their feelings, thoughts, and spirits too.

When we give them attention and care from the start, we are planting the seeds for a future India with strong and smart leaders. These leaders will be all set to handle whatever comes their way with wisdom and strength.

(The writers are students of Mass Communication, Jamia Hamdard)



FAITH CHANGES US - FAITH IN SOMETHING INTRINSICALLY GOOD, SOMETHING OTHER THAN OURSELVES. SOMETHING BIGGER THAN OURSELVES - DONNA GODDARD

tarot 12 New Delhi, December 17, 2023

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ARIES March 21-April 19

This week, prioritize settling any debts or loans. You may encounter requests for financial help from friends or relatives for significant events, and you're well-placed to offer support, whether financial or emotional. Consider participating in charitable activities. Your financial stability inspires dreams of a luxurious life, but mid-week, you might find yourself lost in fantasies and indecision. Although you're drawn to enjoy life's finer aspects - from gourmet dining to elegant fashion and leisurely pursuits it's crucial to have a clear plan. Avoid being swayed by fleeting whims, as this could lead to dissatisfaction. Instead, set realistic and firm goals. By doing so, you align yourself with a path of health, wealth, and overall wellbeing. Remember, a clear vision and gratitude pave the way for fulfillment.

Lucky number 8 | Lucky colour Mint Lucky day Sunday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

Embrace your influential role, characterized by strong communication skills, positive attitudes, and effective behavior towards colleagues. Your organizational and leadership skills shine, marking you as a leader in your workplace. You're adept at understanding and responding to the needs of those around you with empathy. Yet, be cautious: not everyone may align with your working style. Some may attempt to challenge or undermine your efforts. Outcomes of important deals or interviews could be unexpectedly influenced by the actions of rivals. Feeling overwhelmed with responsibilities is natural. To alleviate this, consider delegating tasks. This strategy not only lightens your load but also enhances productivity and work-life balance. Remember, effective leadership often involves empowering others to share the workload.

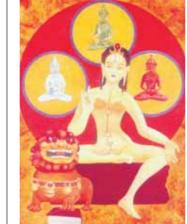
Lucky number 16 | Lucky colour Gray Lucky day Wednesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

After reaping the rewards of your hard work, it's time to stay vigilant and brace for potential conflicts or disagreements in your work environment. You may encounter opposition from someone who perceives themselves as superior, leading to a challenging phase marked by fault-finding, gossip, stiff competition, and verbal disputes. Mid-week, you might find yourself influenced by a negative individual who lacks ethical values, possibly pressuring you into unethical actions not condoned by society. However, your determination and confidence help you navigate these trials successfully. Your commitment to truth and righteousness shines through, leading to recognition and appreciation by week's end. Your high moral stance not only earns you accolades but also enhances your professional standing.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Olive Lucky day Tuesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

Your environment is charged with energy, action, and reaction, but be mindful that excess can lead to distance, confrontation, and unpleasantness. Colleagues may seek to avoid or challenge you, possibly leading to verbal disagreements or clashes of opinion. Channeling your energy into productive endeavors is essential. Fortunately, you are blessed with good health, a respectable position, and authority. Your prominence in your field is undeniable, but maintaining a harmonious work environment could enhance your achievements even further. However, your dominant nature risks damaging the reputation you've worked hard to establish. It's crucial to wisely utilize your energy in a manner that aligns with higher intentions, balancing your assertiveness with the need for collaborative and positive interactions.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Turquoise Lucky day Monday

VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week heralds a phase of prosperity, with financial and emotional gains elevating your sense of security and success. You'll find joy in the material world, luxury, and the satisfaction of desires, alongside a harmonious family life. Mid-week, you'll focus on achieving emotional milestones, possibly experiencing meaningful romantic gestures, marriage proposals, or deepening intimacy with your partner. However, this period of contentment may soon give way to feelings of confusion and instability, with a noticeable lack of warmth and affection in various aspects of your life. As the week closes, you'll strive to restore harmony, adapting to new beliefs and perspectives. This realization that life is an evolving journey prompts a reassessment of old norms and traditions.

Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour Beige Lucky day Wednesday

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22



Embodying luxury, beauty, romance, and balance, the week elevates you to heights of enjoyment and recognition. Your hard work and determination, coupled with divine blessings, bring you fame and a life of pleasures. You're known for fairness, generosity, and impressive leadership skills. Your pure, selfless nature and adaptability make you a beloved figure, both in personal and professional spheres. Your guidance is valued, and your role as a leader is appreciated by those around you. However, as the week progresses, be mindful of potential financial or health challenges. It's a reminder that even in times of success, staying cautious and prepared is essential. Embrace the week's blessings while being aware of life's unpredictability, ensuring you navigate both triumphs and trials with wisdom

Lucky number 20 | Lucky colour Maroon Lucky day Saturday

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

As your days grow increasingly busy, both your professional commitments and academic pursuits as a student demand your full attention, leading to a need for rest. This period calls for selfhealing, rejuvenation, and energy restoration to prepare for future

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week, you might face a health setback, such as an injury or minor surgery, requiring medical attention and care. Fortunately, you'll have the unwavering support of your spouse during this time. Engaging in spirituality and religious activities will provide strength, and practices like mantras, tantric rituals, and exploration of the occult will bolster your faith and help maintain your inner balance. Surrendering to a higher power, you may discover a more compassionate and humane approach to life. This period also fosters stronger family bonds, particularly with your spouse, encouraging open sharing of thoughts. Some may find solace in religious texts or worship. A sense of healing will prevail throughout the week, culminating in a return to your regular life by the week's end, filled with newfound peace and equilibrium.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Purple Lucky day Thursday

CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week, you may find yourself feeling sentimental and emotionally turbulent. Various issues, not aligning with your desires, contribute to this unrest. Your inclination to offer affection and concern might be challenged by circumstances, possibly including health concerns. Specific issues, like menstrual disorders or thyroid problems, could be particularly troubling for some. Financially, it's a time to be cautious and considerate, with a focus on budget control. Mid-week calls for a smart, systematic approach to life, addressing areas like health, wealth, and lifestyle. Adopting a balanced diet and disciplined lifestyle will be beneficial. As the week progresses, expect positive developments in your career. Financial gains are likely, with income potentially arriving from multiple sources, leading to a sense of contentment, happiness, and well-being.

Lucky number 2 | Lucky colour Black Lucky day Monday

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18



At the week's start, you'll need to make tough, emotionfree decisions that could significantly affect your or someone else's life. Strive to remain fair and firm. Work may present competitive challenges: maintaining a calm. submissive approach is advisable to avoid conflicts. Midweek might bring some criticism or negative feedback, potentially affecting your morale. To combat this, focus on activities like yoga and meditation to rebuild confidence and mental stability. It's a crucial time to realign with your goals and dreams. As the week draws to a close, the atmosphere begins to lighten, with negative elements gradually fading. You can look forward to positive developments, possibly including romantic gestures or encouraging news, signaling a shift towards a more hopeful and harmonious phase.

Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour Gold Lucky day Friday

PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week, your childlike energy and impressive work potential are at their peak. However, without clear goals or focused thoughts, your efforts may not yield the desired results. Set a definite target and channel your creative energy constructively. Remember to attend to your family's needs and avoid neglecting any health issues, as prevention is key to avoiding financial losses. Midweek could bring challenges, including potential separations and financial setbacks, leading to strained relationships. Yet, your inner strength and mental resilience will be your pillars of support during this time. The end of the week brings new opportunities, which you might miss if overly focused on personal matters. Engaging in conversations, travel, and pursuits that cater to your emotional needs will be appealing



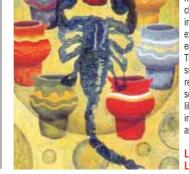
CANCER June 21-July 22

Beginning the week with action rather than emotion, you'll face a pivotal work opportunity requiring sharp skills and decisive action promising future benefits. Success depends on clear thought and communication. Mid-week shifts focus to financial dealings, blending your natural empathy with practicality. You'll engage in charitable acts and fulfill financial obligations, like repaying debts. The week's end brings a significant partnership deal, enhancing both professional and personal connections. This period is particularly favorable for strengthening existing relationships or forming new ones. Singles may find opportunities for romance, expressing feelings through thoughtful gestures like gifts or proposals. Overall, the week balances practicality with emotional fulfillment, culminating in a sense of contentment in both love and work.





Lucky number 14 | Lucky colour Navy Blue Lucky day Saturday



challenges. Overexertion could result in emotional and menta imbalance, possibly leading to irritability. Mid-week, some may experience health issues, such as menstrual disorders, emphasizing the importance of healthcare and regular check-ups This time also poses a risk of conflicts or arguments with superiors at work. Managing your emotions and prioritizing revitalization are key to navigating this phase smoothly. Without self-care, you risk facing the displeasure of authoritative figures like your boss, father, or elder brother. The period highlights the importance of balancing work with rest and integrating relaxation and entertainment into your busy schedule

Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Lavender Lucky day Monday



Lucky number 13 | Lucky colour Lime Lucky day Saturday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 987328333



ASTROTURF BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

hat is in store of my son's destiny? He is having health issues often encountering acute pain in his chest. Medicines prescribed by the doctor is not helping much. Some pundit in my village has opined that my son seems to have become victim of black magic done on him, which is why medicine is not bringing relief. He has suggested remedial measure of occult nature to ward off the evil. It is difficult for me to digest pundit's view. Kindly guide." Someone came asking.

At the outset, rest assured, your son's astrological chart reveals that he is not susceptible to black magic influences. But unless charlatans invent such story, their vested interest will not get served. Don't get befooled. Also, no matter how your son's physiology gets impaired, only medicine can bring relief. "Then why medicine is not bringing relief?" He asked. Well, some diseases have long term bear

ing, asthma being one of them, which your son seems to be suffering from. Also, often recovery takes time particularly for those having low immunity. If necessary, seek second opinion from an expert.

Your son's horoscope clearly reflects inherent health vulnerabilities. The problem being rooted in his physiological construct, they come into play as and when astrological pointers turn unfavourable. His immune system is low, as would the Sun placed opposite Saturn imply. Consequently, given a small trigger, he gets caught up with health issue. His lagna sub-lord Saturn occupies the nakshatra owned by Jupiter, which owns ailment signifying 6th cusp. Here again, 6th cusp sub-lord Rahu occupies the nakshatra owned by Ketu tenanted in the lagna. Whenever there is linkage between lagna and 6th houses, one's health profile remains fragile. Such persons are suscep-

Don't get be-fooled by charlatans



tible to quick infection and thereby health issues. So, your son is vulnerable to health issues by birth.

A deeper analysis reflects upon weak areas of his health profile. Lagna sub-lord Saturn is tenanted in Gemini sign almost at its fag end. Planets at the junction of Gemini and Cancer make you vulnerable to respiratory problems. The 6th sub-lord Rahu is in fiery sign Aries, marked with

the head, which read together with Mars placed adverse to mind signifying Moon makes him susceptible to headaches. Rahu occupying Aries sign represents Mars, it's lord. Mars being lord of 3rd house (identified with lungs region) and 8th house (indicating difficulties), when read together with lagna-sub-lord signification makes him vulnerable to respiratory problems. Hence asthma. The Sun placed adverse to Jupiter is indicative of liver related issues.

In terms of timeline, he would have had health issues beginning close to his 4th year when progressed Lagna reached Ketu's coordinates, and progressed Sun would have become adverse to natal Mars. Again, when he would have been about 16-17 years, progressed lagna would have become adverse to natal Moon, which made him vulnerable to serious health issues. As of now progressed Mars forms favourable alliance

with natal Rahu which is indicative of serious health issues. For, when two planets are placed adverse to each other in natal chart, as and when they form favourable alliance in progressed chart or in transit, they join hands to create problem. In his natal chart Mars is ill-disposed off to Rahu. Since your son's health vulnerability are so clearly indicated with probable timeline, there is no scope for black magic playing any part. Proper treatment alone will help him.

"Sir, my son has encountered all the health issues you indicated, and the timeline also matches. But he is in agony. By when would he come out of his problems? Would you suggest any remedial measure to mitigate his suffering?" Let me assure you that your son is running Saturn mahadasha, which if indicates health issues, also promises recovery. For, it is also a strong significator of 5th house, which acts as antidote to ailment

signifying 6th house. But antardasha lord Rahu is indicative of baffling diagnosis, which is why doctors have not been able to hit the nail so far. Under such circumstances, often alternative medicines such as Homeopathy or Ayurveda work very well. Particularly in immunity related issues, alternative medicines have been found offering quick relief. Also, he should do pranayama under the guidance of an expert. That will help him tone up the respiratory system, as has been experienced in many cases. You should appreciate that asthma stretches for long, calling for long drawn treatment. Therefore, have patience, he will recover as is promised in his chart. No astrological remedial measure will work, proper health care alone would help recovery. The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Connect with him at Tel: 91-11-9818037273/9871037272 Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com

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